

REGD. NO. DA 781







Polls bubble bursts

BNP's early pullout makes AL win insignificant; irregularities widespread; AL rivals for councillor posts cause violence

	CITY	CANDIDATE	VOTES
	DHAKA SOUTH (808 centres out of 889)	SAYEED KHOKON	4,89,216
		MIRZA ABBAS	2,64,939
	DHAKA NORTH (985 centres out of 1093)	ANNISUL HUQ	4,20,699
		TABITH AWAL	2,91,499
	CHITTAGONG (All centres)	AJM NASIR UDDIN	4,75,361
		MANJUR ALAM	3,04,837

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

An early boycott by the BNP knocked the air out of the city elections in Dhaka and Chittagong yesterday, pushing numerous voting irregularities into the background and making the results virtually irrelevant.

Polling agents of BNP-backed candidates were found absent in most centres and the party ultimately handed a walkover to the ruling Awami

League contestants just hours into the voting. Print and electronic media journalists were shut out from covering the polls process at various centres in Dhaka and Chittagong.

In many centres, AL's youth and student fronts took the leading role with help from police in controlling the voting process. LAW ENFORCERS OR LAW BREAKERS? Widespread irregularities, including vote

SEE PAGE 12 COL 4



Two men stamp the pink ballot papers for the councillor post reserved for women at Khilgaon Model College polling centre at 1:33pm yesterday.

рното: STAR

No anomalies, no threat

CEC claims polls were fair, peaceful

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief Election Commissioner Kazi Rakibuddin Ahmad yesterday claimed the city corporation elections in Dhaka and Chittagong were held in

a fair, peaceful and festive manner.

He said that except for some stray incidents, the commission found no irregularities while visiting some polling centres in the capital. He thanked all for helping hold a "fair election".

"No agents or voters complained of any irregularities. None faced any threats on their way to polling centres," the CEC told a press conference at the Election

MORE ON PAGE 2, 10, 11, 20 SEE PAGE 16 COL 4



"It's pleasant to see one can exercise his voting rights in a peaceful atmosphere, free from any interference and fear. The nation had struggled for a long time to establish peoples' voting

PRIME MINISTER SHEIKH HASINA AFTER CASTING VOTES IN DCC POLLS

Voting not well at all Was BNP serious?

Rigging plan executed by AL, helped by police

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The day started high on hopes for a fair election. But it was not long before the optimism was blatantly doused.

SCAN THIS QR CODE TO WATCH VIDEO

Activists of the pro-ruling Chhatra league by and large occupied polling stations with police and other law enforcement agencies lending them a

helping hand.

To cover their tracks, they made sure the journalists' access to the scenes of wrongdoings is restricted.

Take, for instance, the Dhaka College centre. At around 9:00am, about 100 activists of BCL stormed into the near-empty venue.

What was essentially a sedate envi-

ronment was filled with cacophony. Split in groups, they took control of all the six booths of centre No. 343 and started casting votes at will.

They grabbed the ballot paper books, stamped them with the Hilsa symbol of Sayeed Khokon, the Awami

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Party's intention, action shrouded in questions

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The announcement of polls boycott midway through voting, noticeable absence of polling agents and sloppiness since the time of picking candidates have raised questions whether the BNP was serious about the mayoral polls in Dhaka city.

The party announced its decision to pull out of the election around 12:20pm, about three and a half hours before the voting closed, claiming most of their polling agents were either barred from entering the poll centres or forced out. Some agents were also detained by law enforcers, it added.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1



BCL foils Star's constant vigilance Two reporters assaulted, driven out of DU centre

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two correspondents of The Daily Star were beaten up in the line of duty by activists of Chhatra League

at a Dhaka University polling centre yesterday afternoon. Porimol Palma and Mahbubur Rahman, who were assigned in the DU area to cover the Annex

Building Polling Centre, were

attacked and driven out around SEE PAGE 2 COL 3

STAY OUT, media

AL men assault 10 journos, deny

access to polling centres

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least 10 journalists were assaulted by ruling party men during the city corporation elections yesterday. Some reporters were robbed of their mobile phones, handbags and cash.

Polling officers, law enforcers and ruling party

men allegedly prevented reporters, photogra-

phers and cameramen from entering polling centres, journalists and eyewitnesses said. Two reporters of The Daily Star -- Porimol Palma and Mahbubur Rahman Khan -- were

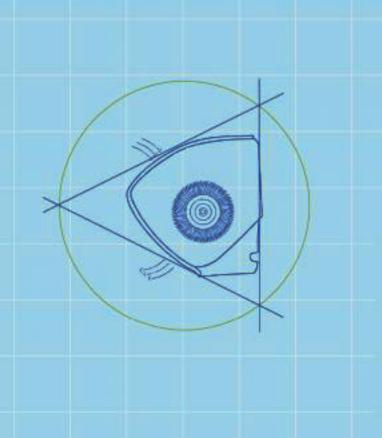
beaten by Bangladesh Chhatra League men when the journalists were covering a polling centre at the Science Annex Building of Dhaka University. SEE PAGE 12 COL 4

Shamim Noor of the Jugantor after being assaulted in a Segunbagicha polling centre yesterday.





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