



ZILA PARISHAD POLLS

Rebels stun AL in chairman posts

Yet AL secures absolute control of local govt bodies

STAR REPORT

The ruling Awami League-backed chairman candidates suffered defeat at the hands of their party rebels in about a third of the 38 zila parishads that went to polls yesterday, amid boycott by the BNP and the main opposition Jatiya Party.

AL-sponsored chairman candidates already won unopposed in 21 district councils, so there was no need for voting for the post in those districts.

AL dissidents beat 11 of their party men, who were backed by their high command. One JP leader and an independent contestant also defeated AL-backed chairman aspirants in two zila parishads, according to unofficial results.

AL favourites bagged 25 chairman posts in yesterday's polls held peacefully amid tight security.

In all, they have now secured the chairman post in 46 district councils, which means the ruling party will have absolute control over the body, the top most tier of the local governments.

FINAL RESULTS
(Chairman posts in 38 dists)

AL	25
AL rebels	11
Others	2

21 chairman elected unopposed, polls postponed in 2 posts

There are 64 zila parishads in the country. Polls in the three hill districts -- Bandarban, Rangamati and Khagrachari -- are held separately under their own law. Polls for the chairman post in two of the other 61 districts were postponed following a High Court order.

It was the first time that the district councils went to polls yesterday.

The party favourites who lost to the dissidents questioned the fairness of the polls. They also alleged that the rebel candidates spent hefty sums to bribe the voters.

Elected representatives of the other local government bodies -- union parishads, upazila parishads, municipalities and city corporations -- are the voters in this election. It may be noted that most of these posts are now held by the ruling party men.

"I lost to money. It is a political defeat to the influence of money," said AL-backed candidate Mahbub Zaman Bhulu in Rajshahi district.

A former administrator of Rajshahi Zila Parishad, he lost to his party rebel Mohammad Ali Sarkar, a businessman.

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A ramp of Moghbazar-Malibagh flyover is being extended near FDC in the capital yesterday. The cabinet committee on purchase has approved increasing the project cost, which now stands at Tk 1,219 crore. The project was initially estimated to cost Tk 772.7 crore and be finished by December 2015. Following revision of the plans and long delays, the cost has gone up and the deadline was pushed to June, 2017.

PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ

8 incumbents suffer rout
6 lose to AL rebels,
2 to JP, independent candidates

STAR REPORT

Eight incumbent district administrators, all leaders of the ruling Awami League, suffered defeats in district council polls yesterday.

Of them, six were defeated by party rebels while the two others lost to Jatiya Party and independent candidates.

AL insiders said the former administrators lost the polls as they got involved in various irregularities and were not in contact with electorates.

"The former administrator did not have contact with the electorates. I made a pledge that I would be in touch with the electorates and would not allow any irregularities to occur."

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PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

A woman casting her vote at the Agargaon Taltala Govt Colony Girls High School and College polling centre.

Super security

45,000 law enforcers for 60,000 voters

STAR REPORT

The voters were no ordinary people. More than 60,000 elected public representatives of local government bodies had the suffrage in yesterday's district council polls.

And the deployment of over 45,000 law enforcers to maintain law and order made it one of the most heavily-guarded polls ever held in the country.

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Noab worried over ninth wage board

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Newspaper Owners' Association of Bangladesh (Noab) has expressed concern over recent media reports on formation of the Ninth Wage Board.

Only three years have gone by since the Eighth Wage Board Award was implemented in September 2013. In the past, no wage board was announced without a gap of five years. So, it's necessary to analyse the rationale for declaring the Ninth Wage Board before that gap, said a Noab press statement yesterday.

Besides, annual increment is given to employees, making adjustments to inflation every year. Therefore, formation of the Ninth Wage Board before a gap of five years is not acceptable.

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'NEO JMB LEADER' MUSA

He covered his tracks to stay off dragnet

ANWAR ALI and RAFIUL ISLAM

Before leaving home for the so-called Jihad, fugitive "Neo JMB" militant Maynul Islam Musa destroyed everything that could link him to his home, so that law enforcers could not track him.

The last time Musa visited his village home at Baghmara in Rajshahi was in early April, just days before he went traceless. He had told people at home that he was going abroad.

He then destroyed all his photos and belongings there.

"His photographs were in our family albums. He cut those out one by one with a pair of scissors and set fire to those. He did not even leave one of his shirts for me before leaving," said his mother Sufia Akter.

"I do not have anything of my son," she sighed.

When asked about the reason, Musa told his mother, "Photographs will bring no good but sins."

Musa went to his in-laws place about

12km from his village home and destroyed all photos and belongings of him there as well, said his sister-in-law Nisha Moni.

According to police, Musa is one of the top leaders of "Neo JMB", who is trying to reorganise the outfit and carry out a targeted attack.

To cover his tracks, Musa, once an English teacher of Life School in Uttara-13 in Dhaka, destroyed documents and evidence from his Uttara home and the school before becoming traceless, his former colleagues and police said.

He was very active on social media but he removed his friends from his Facebook account and eventually deactivated his account.

"When his involvement in militancy came to light following the killing of Maj (retd) Jahid, I found his phone switched off. I tried to see his Facebook page but did not find it," one of his former colleagues at the school told The Daily Star preferring anonymity.

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**TOP QUOTE**

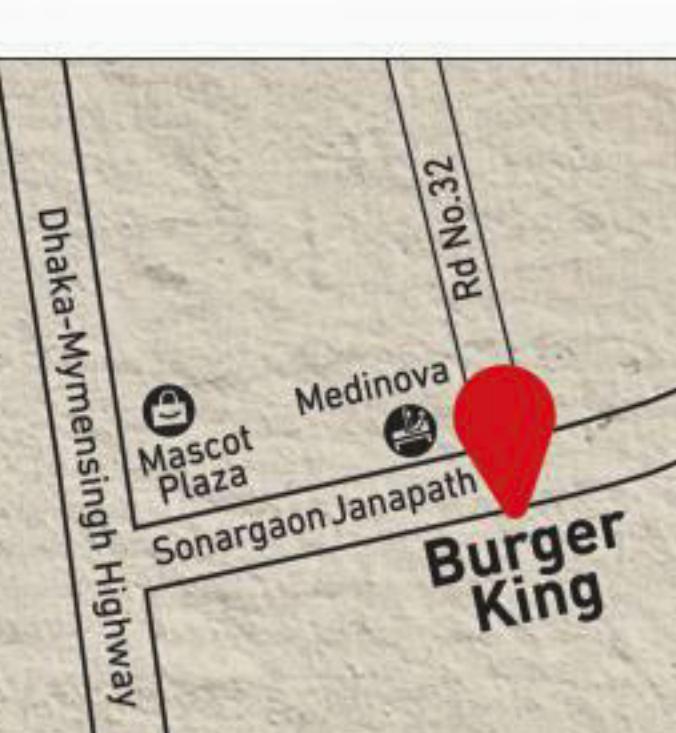
"It is not this resolution that is isolating Israel. It is the permanent policy of settlement construction that risks making peace impossible."

US SECRETARY OF STATE
JOHN KERRY
ABOUT THE UN RESOLUTION
CONDEMNING ISRAELI SETTLEMENTS
IN OCCUPIED PALESTINE

THE KING IS IN UTTARA

OPENS AT 4 PM ON 29 DECEMBER. PLOT-16, SECTOR-9, SONARGAON JANAPATH, UTTARA.

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TBWA/Benchmark



Recognition from esteemed organizations made our journey through 2016 worthy for a better tomorrow

Bank Asia Limited was awarded

Best Presented Annual Reports 2015

Second Prize for Integrated Reporting by ICAB

Sustainability Reporting Awards 2016

Best Sustainability Report in Bangladesh by NCSR, Jakarta

ICSB National Award 2015

Bronze Award for Corporate Governance Excellence by ICSB

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