



YOUR RIGHT TO KNOW

SECOND EDITION

THE DAILY

Star

ON FRIDAY

DHAKA FRIDAY DECEMBER 2, 2022

"China has to figure out a way forward on dealing with Covid, a way forward that answers the health needs but also answers the needs of the people."

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken on China's lockdown protests



REGD. No. DA 781

VOL. XXXII No. 311

AGRAHAYAN 17, 1429 BS

www.thedailystar.net

JAMADIUL AWAL 7, 1444 HJRI

20 PAGES PLUS TOGGLE: Tk 15.00

GAIBANDHA BY-ELECTION

Irregularities well-orchestrated

EC says in review of probe report, recommends action against 134 local officials

MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR

The Election Commission recommended punishment for 134 officials involved in Gaibandha-5 by-polls after its probe found their involvement in irregularities and negligence in performing duties.

They include the returning officer for the October 12 by-election; 125 local government and presiding officers, including teachers and bankers; an executive magistrate; and an additional deputy commissioner.

The commission, however, did not recommend any action against the Gaibandha deputy commissioner and superintendent of police as the probe did not find their involvement in the irregularities, according to Chief Election Commissioner Kazi Habibul Awal.

The EC in its probe found that irregularities took place at 125 polling centres out of the total 145. Besides, the committee could not comment on the situation at 16 centres as CCTV footage there was not available. No irregularities took place at four polling stations, it added.

The EC in its review said voting irregularities took place in almost all polling stations. "It was done in a coordinated and well-planned way and many were involved in the planning," it added.

In a move not seen in recent times, the EC stopped the Gaibandha-5 by-polls,

saying the situation went "out of control" due to widespread irregularities.

The CEC and other commissioners, while monitoring the CCTV footage at the EC office on October 12, found some people illegally present in the polling booths and influencing voters.

ACTIONS AND REASONS

At a press conference at his Dhaka office yesterday, CEC Awal said the EC secretariat will take departmental action against the EC's Rajshahi Regional Election Officer Saiful Islam, also the returning officer for the by-polls, for negligence of duties within a month, in line with the Election Officials (Special Provision) Act, 1991.

The EC also recommended relevant offices to take action against 125 presiding officers (PO).

The EC officials said the POs of these centres have grossly neglected their duties, and there was no atmosphere for fair voting inside the polling booths. They did not even take any initiative to restore the proper voting atmosphere.

The CEC at the press conference said they recommended that the authorities concerned take action against Gobaindganj Police Station sub-inspectors Tarun Kumar, Abdullah Al Mamun and Anisur Rahman, Sadullahpur Police Station SI Kanak Ranjan Barman and Panchagar's Atoari Police Station ASI Dulal Hossain

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1



"It has become clear from this incident that irregularities in elections have become a usual matter. If that's true, it seems we don't need any election."



Japan's players fell to their knees, searched the skies and embraced their nearest teammates as the referee blew the final whistle, which confirmed a stunning 2-1 win against Spain and not only ensured Japan would go the round of 16, but do so as the champions of Group E.

PHOTO: AFP



Germans eliminated

Japan fairytale continues

AFP, Doha

Spain staggered through to the World Cup last 16 on Thursday despite a 2-1 defeat by Japan, who remarkably won Group E on a rollercoaster night which saw four-time champions Germany eliminated.

Japan secured another incredible triumph after beating

Germany in their opening game, with their progression from the "group of death" one of the greatest achievements in the country's footballing history.

For a few heart-stopping minutes Spain were poised to head out when Costa Rica were leading in the other game, but the 2010 champions squeezed through after Germany did them a favour by coming back

to beat Los Ticos.

Spain and Germany ended on four points each, but La Roja progressed on goal difference.

Alvaro Morata sent Spain ahead early on with a towering header, but Japan dramatically struck back at the start of the second half.

Ritsu Doan and Ao Tanaka's goals saw them mount a sensational comeback

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4

DESERT FEST Argentina get their mojo back



ABDULLAH AL MEHDI

Clenched teeth, head lowered.

That is how Lionel Messi returned to the dressing room after his first-half penalty was saved by Wojciech Szczesny. If that is how things had ended, it could have been Messi's last World Cup game. But his team had other ideas.

The momentum that Argentina had carried to the World Cup after a 36-game unbeaten run screamed to a halt following a stunning loss to

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4

Table with 2 columns: Match, Time. Includes South Korea v Portugal, Ghana v Uruguay, Serbia v Switzerland, Cameroon v Brazil.

BNP'S RAJSHAHI RALLY People suffer as strike in force

STAR REPORT

Defying obstacles, BNP leaders and activists continued pouring into Rajshahi city yesterday as an indefinite transport strike came into force in the division's eight districts in the morning ahead of the party's rally tomorrow.

Many BNP of them walked about 10 to 30 kilometres to reach the city.

Most of those who arrived at the city until Wednesday night stayed under the open sky at Hazrat Shah Makhdom Central Eidgah ground. Yesterday morning, local BNP men managed some tents and tarpaulin for them. The rally venue, Madrasa Maidan, is close to Eidgah.

Many opposition men were also staying at the houses of their relatives and fellow party members.

The indefinite transport strike caused sufferings to passengers in Rajshahi division's eight districts throughout the day yesterday.

Though the strike was scheduled to begin at 6:00am, most of the buses stopped plying since Wednesday evening.

Many people were seen going to Rajshahi Railway Station to take trains.

Visiting the Eidgah ground yesterday, this newspaper found that many BNP leaders and activists were resting inside tents while others cooking food.

At the Padma Garden community centre in Dargapara, BNP men were collecting lunch boxes standing in a long queue.

Saidur Rahman Bachchu, general secretary of Sirajganj District BNP, said some 5,000 party men from the district reached Rajshahi

SEE PAGE 11 COL 4

Quicksand below development Says Debapriya

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Marginalised people have not benefited equally from the economic growth due to deepening inequality, weakening public institutions, and a culture of fear, Citizen's Platform for SDGs, Bangladesh, said yesterday.

"There is a quicksand underneath the development. There is discernible progress in terms of schools, hospitals and road infrastructure development. But the people left behind remain marginalised," Debapriya Bhattacharya, convener of the platform, told a press briefing in the capital's Brac Centre Inn.

The quicksand can be avoided by taking proper policies, he said.

"During this period of development, the government institutions have become weaker, leaving the marginalised people unguarded," he said at the briefing organised by the Citizen's Platform for SDGs to share the findings of a paper titled "Does Local Realities Reflect the National Development Narrative? Perspectives from Sub-national Consultations".

Around 500 people joined the

SEE PAGE 11 COL 1

EXPORT RECEIPTS CROSS \$5B FOR FIRST TIME. Bangladesh's earnings from merchandise exports crossed the \$5-billion mark for the first time in November, a major boost for the country reeling from the foreign exchange crisis.

BRITISH COUNCIL Young Learners Holiday Course. Want to get an 'Awesome Achievers and Adventure' certificate for your child? Book your seat today!

Islami Bank's clarification regarding some recent news published in media. Islami Bank Bangladesh Limited has been conducting banking activities with reputation for last 40 years. A significant number of large industries of the country have been established with the financing of this bank.