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If in doubt, anyone can check EC's turnout data

Says CEC; EC puts the figure at 41.99pc

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief Election Commissioner Kazi Habibul Awal said the Election Commission has provided an accurate percentage of the voter turnout in the 12th national polls held Sunday, and it welcomes anyone who wants to challenge the data.

The CEC made the remarks at a media briefing at the EC media centre in the capital yesterday afternoon.

According to the final results, 41.99 percent of votes were cast in the election, he said.

Habibul estimated the turnout to be 40 percent after the voting came to a close Sunday afternoon.

"However, the figure may change after the counting of votes ends. The voting rate may or may not increase."



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Farmers in Barishal Sadar upazila's Karapur village yesterday began clearing out the rice straws from paddy fields after the harvest of Aman. Once all the straws are collected, they will be sold as cattle feed for livestock.

PHOTO: TITU DAS

Beckenbauer passes away

AFP, Berlin

Legend Franz Beckenbauer, who left a unique imprint on German football as player, captain and coach, has died at the age of 78, the German football association said Monday.

"Franz Beckenbauer was definitely the biggest German footballer of all time, and above all one of the greatest men who I have known," said DFB vice president Hans-Joachim Watzke.

Beckenbauer, one of only three men to win the World Cup as player and as a coach, passed away on Sunday, the DFB said.

Former captain of the German team in the 1970s, Beckenbauer had in the last years been suffering from health problems and lived mostly withdrawn from the public eye in Salzburg, just across from the German border.

Known in football-obsessed Germany as 'the Kaiser' meaning 'the Emperor', Beckenbauer played a central role in some of the country's greatest sporting achievements, but his legacy was later tarnished for his involvement in scandals surrounding Germany's successful bid to host the 2006 World Cup.



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249 more killed in Gaza in 24 hrs

WHO cancels delivery of medical supplies to north of enclave

AGENCIES

At least 249 Palestinians were killed in Israeli strikes on Gaza in 24 hours, the enclave's health ministry said yesterday, as WHO cancelled delivery of medical supplies to north of Gaza after failing to receive security guarantees.

It was the fourth time WHO had to call off a planned mission to bring urgently needed medical supplies to Al-Awda Hospital and the central drug store in northern Gaza since December 26, it said.

"It has now been 12 days since we were last able to reach northern Gaza," the WHO office in the occupied Palestinian territories wrote on the X social media platform.

"Heavy bombardment, movement restrictions, and interrupted communications are making it nearly impossible to deliver medical supplies regularly and safely across Gaza, particularly in the north."

The delivery planned on Sunday, WHO said, had been designed to sustain the operations of five hospitals in the northern part of the enclave.

In separate comments, the International Rescue Committee (IRC) aid group said its emergency medical team and the Medical Aid for Palestinians charity had been forced to withdraw and cease its activities at the Al-Aqsa Hospital in Gaza's Middle Area due to increasing Israeli military activity in the area.

- Israeli strike kills top Hezbollah commander in Lebanon
- Blinken meets Arab leaders in diplomatic push to stop offensive
- Gaza death toll rises to 23,084

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Dhaka saw lowest voter turnout

EC data show

ZYMA ISLAM

Dhaka district had the lowest voter turnout in Sunday's election, with only 25 percent vote cast, according to Election Commission data.

The overall national lowest turnout was recorded in Dhaka-15 constituency — only 13 percent. Awami League candidate and State Minister for Industries Kamal Ahmed Majumder won here with the approval of only a 10th of the total voters. He bagged 39,632 of the 3,44,507 votes in the seat.

Dhaka-17, comprising elite areas like Gulshan, saw the second lowest vote cast with 17 percent turnout. MA Arafat, who bagged the seat in the by-polls late last year with an even lower turnout, got the votes of only 15 percent (48,049) of the total voters (3,23,932) in the area, according to the EC data obtained by The Daily Star.

The third lowest turnout was recorded in Dhaka-8, which has been taken by former Madaripur lawmaker and AL leader AFM Bahauddin Nasim. The seat saw the third-lowest turnout — 18.7 percent, of which Nasim has the approval of only 17 percent (46,610).

A total of 141 seats had turnouts which

were lower than the 41.99 percent national average vote cast reported by the chief election commissioner.

Of them, more than 50 seats recorded less than 30 percent turnouts.

Districts which have historically belonged to the oppositions, including BNP and Jatiyo Party, did the poorest in terms of turnout.

After Dhaka, Lakshimpur, a traditional BNP bastion, had the lowest voter turnout, drawing in only 26 percent of the voters, according to the EC data.

Similarly, Bogura and Kurigram, which are historically BNP and JP strongholds, managed to draw 30 percent voters to the polling centres.

Chapainawabganj, once a BNP stronghold but where Jamaat-e-Islami has a firm footing now, recorded 35 percent ballot cast.

The ruling party had given up Gaibandha-1 and Gaibandha-2 for JP as a part of a seat-sharing agreement and removed its own candidates from the two seats. These two constituencies saw 30 percent and 34 percent turnout.

In comparison, the neighbouring seats of Gaibandha saw up to 54 percent turnout.

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US launches first moon lander in 50 years

CNN ONLINE



A towering new rocket has taken flight, carrying what could be the first commercial lander to touch down on the moon — and the first lunar landing mission to launch from the United States since 1972.

The Vulcan Centaur rocket, a never-before-flown model developed by United Launch Alliance, a joint venture by Boeing and Lockheed Martin, roared to life at Cape Canaveral Space Force Station in Florida at 2:18 am ET yesterday. The launch vehicle soared through space for nearly an hour, expending its fuel as it ripped away from Earth's gravity and sent the lunar lander, called Peregrine, on its way to the moon.

Just after 3:00 am ET, the Peregrine spacecraft separated from the rocket and began its slow journey to the lunar surface. If all goes according to plan, the lander could touch down on the moon on February 23.

Pittsburgh-based company Astrobot Technology developed the Peregrine lander — named after the falcon that is the fastest-flying bird in the world — under a contract with Nasa.

"It's a dream ... For 16 years we've been pushing for this moment today," Astrobot CEO John Thornton said during a webcast of the launch.

BUSINESS

Non-banks' bad loans hit record

Defaulted loans at non-bank financial institutions accounted for a record 30 percent of disbursed loans, indicating a fragile situation.

Soured loans at the 35 NBFIs in the country stood at Tk 21,658 crore in September last year, rising by 9 percent from June the same year and 25 percent from a year ago.

The data comes at a time when international agencies and economists have raised concerns over vulnerabilities in Bangladesh's financial sector.

STORY ON BI



Displaced Palestinians, who fled their houses due to Israeli strikes, ride a vehicle in Rafah in the southern Gaza Strip to seek another shelter in the besieged Palestinian enclave yesterday; inset, People inspect a car wreck following reported Israeli strike in Rafah.

PHOTO: AFP, REUTERS

1 killed, 30 hurt in post-polls violence

60 houses, a kindergarten vandalised in 5 districts

STAR REPORT

One person was killed and at least 30 were injured, while 60 houses, two shops, and a kindergarten were vandalised in separate incidents of post-polls violence in five districts yesterday.

In Netrakona's Atpara upazila, a 24-year-old man died yesterday after being attacked during a procession on Sunday night.

Nurul Amin, a supporter of independent MP-elect for Netrakona-3 Ifitqur Uddin Talukder Pintu, was part of the victory procession brought out by Pintu's supporters in Deuresee Bazar around 9:00pm.

At that time, some supporters of defeated AL candidate Asim Kumar Ukil launched an attack, leaving around 10 people injured, said Md Lutfar Rahman, additional superintendent of police in Netrakona.

The injured were taken to a local hospital. However, as Nurul's condition deteriorated, he was referred to Mymensingh Medical College Hospital and then shifted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital in the capital.

He suffered stab wounds in the chest and head, said Bachchu Mia, in charge of DMCH Police Outpost, adding that Nurul succumbed to his injuries in the hospital around 4:00pm yesterday.

No case was lodged till filing the report around 9:00pm yesterday.

In Gaibandha, Saghata Upazila Parishad Chairman

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