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## Stop blaming each other

Hasina tells AL leaders regarding election results

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Awami League President Sheikh Hasina yesterday asked the party leaders and activists to stop blaming each other centring the polls result.

"Of those who contested the election, some won, some could not. In that case, I would request everyone to stop blaming each other or finding out who is guilty of what," said Hasina.

She also warned party leaders that the opposition will try to take advantage of it if they remain busy finding faults within themselves.

The AL chief was addressing a joint meeting of the AL's central executive council, advisory council and its associate bodies at the party's central office at Bangabandhu Avenue.

Hasina said, "There had been many conspiracies to foil the election. We held the election braving all conspiracies."

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Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina pays tribute to the martyrs of the Bangladesh Armed Forces who laid down their lives during the nation's 1971 Liberation War. The tribute took place at the flame eternal, Shikha Anirban, located in the Dhaka Cantonment, yesterday. PHOTO: BSS

## HC orders probe into Ayaan's death

Asks why Tk 5cr should not be given to family

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday ordered the director general of Directorate General of Health Services to take steps to investigate the death of five-year-old Ayaan at United Medical College Hospital in Dhaka and to submit a report in seven days.

The court issued a rule asking the authorities concerned of the hospital and government to explain why they should not be directed to give Tk 5 crore to the family of Ayaan, who died following a circumcision at the hospital, allegedly due to negligence and wrong treatment.

The HC also asked the DG of DGHS to submit a list of the hospitals without licences in a month.

The hospital authorities have been ordered to submit a report on the incidents of death at the hospital in last 15 years to the HC in three months.

The bench of Justice Mustafa Zaman Islam and Justice Md Atabullah issued the order and rule following a petition filed Supreme Court lawyer ABM Shahjahan Akanda Masum and Ayaan's father Shamim Ahmed, seeking necessary directives.

Shahjahan recently told The Daily Star that on December 31 last year, Ayaan was reportedly circumcised under "excessive" anesthesia at the hospital in Badda.

He was transferred to the hospital's Gulshan branch as he did not regain consciousness a few hours post-operation. Seven days after keeping him on life support in the paediatric intensive care unit, the doctors declared Ayaan dead, he said.

## SC upholds HC order on Fakhrul's bail

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court yesterday upheld a High Court order that directed the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court in Dhaka to accept, hear, and dispose of the bail petitions of BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir in nine cases.

A four-member bench of the Appellate Division of the SC, headed by Chief Justice Obaidul Hassan, dismissed the petition filed by the state challenging the HC order.

The bench passed the order as the HC order passed on December 18 last year has already been implemented and therefore, the state's petition has become

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# Signatures they got, not votes

159 independent candidates fail to get even 1pc ballot

ASIFUR RAHMAN and DIPAN NANDY

Despite amassing the required one percent voter signatures to contest the national polls as an independent candidate, around 36 percent of independents couldn't even secure one percent vote in the January 7 election.

This means people who signed up as their supporters didn't even bother to vote for them on election day.

Apart from party candidates, former lawmakers who ran as independents do not require the one percent voter signatures.

A total of 159 out of 437 independents received less than one percent of the votes, with five

of them securing fewer than 100 votes each.

For example, in Nilphamari-3, which has a total of 2,75,341 voters, five independent candidates entered the fray, each submitting signatures from 2,753 supporters required for candidacy.

However, the election results revealed that Abu Sayeed Shamim and Hukum Ali Khan, two independent candidates, received only 38 and 94 votes, respectively.

Shamim's 38 votes marked the lowest among all 1,969 candidates nationwide.

In Dhaka-14, where independent candidates required 4,182 voter signatures each, four out of five failed to secure even one percent of

the votes, with Kazi Faridul Haque, ZI Russel, Mohammad Mohibullah, and Mohammad Emrul Kayes Khan receiving 1,584, 546, 666, and 119 votes, respectively.

Contacted, Emrul said, "When a voter signs for a candidate, it opens them up to intimidation and other underhanded tactics. When other contestants get to know about a voter's allegiance, they often attempt to sway the voter in various ways. Consequently, supporters who initially pledged their support might vote for some other candidate."

"Many do not go to cast vote in fear of intimidation," he added.

In 2008, the Representation of the People Order, 1972 was amended by adding section 12(3A) -- "In the case of an independent candidate, every nomination paper shall have a list of signatures of one percent electors of the

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## Dhaka Int'l Trade Fair begins Jan 21

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

This year's Dhaka International Trade Fair will begin on January 21 at the month-long event's permanent venue in Dhaka's Purbachal.

The schedule was set in a meeting at the commerce ministry in Dhaka yesterday.

The prime minister is scheduled to inaugurate the DITF, said Senior Commerce Secretary Tapan Kanti Ghosh.

The showcase normally begins on the first day of January, but this time it got delayed because of the elections held on January 7.

Usually, the government issues a notice for local and international companies around three months before the beginning of the expo, but this time the announcement came only a week ago. The Export Promotion Bureau and the commerce ministry are organising the event.

## SHILPAKALA PADAK 20 individuals, organisations set to receive award

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Twenty cultural icons and organisations are set to receive the Shilpakala Padak in recognition of their contributions to the cultural arena for the fiscal years of 2021 and 2022.

Liaquat Ali Lucky, director-general of the academy, disclosed the information at a press conference yesterday.

Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy has been bestowing this accolade annually since 2013.

The selected individuals and institutions will be presented with a gold medal bearing the name and monogram of Shilpakala Academy, along with a certificate and a cheque worth Tk 1 lakh.

The honourees for 2021 are -- Mohammad Nuruzzaman (instrumentalist), Sharmin Hossain (dance), Sadi Mohammad (vocal), Biren Shome (fine arts), Prof Abdus Selim (dramatics), Mohammad Nohir Uddin (folklore), Dr Matin Rahman (film), Kazi Madina (recitation), MA Majid (Jatra artiste), and Jatiya Rabindra Sangeet Sammelan Parishad (creative cultural unit).

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## Samrat gets bail in money laundering case

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday granted permanent bail to expelled Jubo League leader Ismail Hossain Chowdhury Samrat in a Tk 222 crore money laundering case.

The judge also granted the petition submitted for adjournment of the charge framing hearing in the case.

Judge Monjurul Imam of Special Judge's Court-6 set March 5 for holding hearing on the charge framing against Samrat in the case.

Samrat, a "kingpin" of illegal casino business in the capital, was present at the court during the hearing.

On November 26 of 2020, the ACC submitted the charge sheet to the Dhaka Metropolitan Senior Sessions Judge's Court, saying that the charges brought against him were primarily proven.

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## Dhaka traffic goes haywire

People suffer on roads for hours due to VIP movement, school commute

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The bustling streets of Dhaka witnessed large scale traffic congestion, exacerbating the sufferings of city dwellers, bringing vehicles in many parts of the city to a standstill yesterday.

The traffic congestion is attributed to VIP movement and school traffic, along with the fact that many people are now returning from outside Dhaka following the election.

Students, officegoers and commuters faced severe disruption to their daily schedules, with many waiting for more than one hour in the gridlocked streets.

The congestion stretched across the city, from Motijheel and Jatrabari to Gulistan, Kakrail, and beyond. Shahbagh, Karwan Bazar, Bijoy Sarani, Mohakhali, Banani, and neighbouring areas all experienced major congestion.

Talha Jubayer, a private job holder, found himself stuck for nearly two hours in the Shahbag area while commuting from Agargaon to Gulistan around 4:00pm. He faced similar delays earlier at the Bijoy Sarani intersection as well.

Shefa Rahman, travelling from Motijheel to Farmgate around 2:00pm, shared her frustration on Facebook. "I was on a bus, but it was barely moving on this route. Sensing the situation, I got off and started walking."



Vehicles stand motionless, forming a tailback, on Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue in the capital yesterday. Dhaka witnessed noticeably heavy traffic throughout the day due to VIP movement, schools and many travelling to and from the city. The photo was taken in Karwan Bazar area in the evening. PHOTO: TITU DAS