



Readers browse newspapers at a roadside stall in the capital yesterday morning to follow coverage of the February 12 national election. Amid the surge of misinformation and disinformation online, many still turn to print for reliable and authentic news. The photo was taken in Farmgate area.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

REFERENDUM 'Yes' wins but...

MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR and
ARAFAT RAHAMAN

The "Yes" vote in Thursday's referendum received comparatively lower support than in the previous three plebiscites.

In the referendum on the constitutional issue of the July National Charter, 4,80,74,429 votes were cast in favour of "Yes", while 2,25,65,627 voters chose "No", Election Commission Senior Secretary Akhtar Ahmed told reporters at the EC office yesterday.

The turnout rate was 60.25 percent. Later, the EC's public relations office released detailed figures showing that a total of 7,69,51,382 votes were cast.

According to the breakdown, the "Yes" vote secured 62.74 percent support, while the "No" vote obtained 29.32 percent. The remaining 74,02,285 ballots, or 9.61 percent, were cancelled.

EC officials said ballots are usually cancelled if a voter does not mark any option, marks all options, or places the mark incorrectly.

Contacted, Election Commissioner Abdur Rahmanel Masud said the commission would look into the matter.

EC data show that although the referendum secured majority support nationwide, the "No" vote won in 11 constituencies -- Jhenidah-1, Khulna-1, Gopalganj-1, Gopalganj-2, Gopalganj-3, Sunamganj-2, Chattogram-12,



- "Yes" secures 62.74% support
- Turnout recorded at 60.25%
- 4,80,74,429 votes cast for "Yes"; 2,25,65,627 for "No"
- 74,02,285 ballots cancelled, accounting for 9.61%
- "No" prevails in 11 constituencies, including three Gopalganj seats, hill districts
- "Yes" support lower than in previous three referendums

Chattogram-13, Khagrachhari, Rangamati and Bandarban.

The three Gopalganj constituencies recorded clear defeats for the proposal.

In Gopalganj-1, "No" got 1,28,298 votes, far ahead of the 54,716 votes cast for "Yes".

In Gopalganj-2, "No" received 1,07,290 votes, while "Yes" obtained 34,302.

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Big names, big upsets

Heavyweights who failed to hold ground in 13th nat'l election

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Several heavyweight and widely discussed candidates have suffered defeats in the 13th national parliamentary election, triggering discussions in political circles.

According to unofficial results, multiple senior leaders from BNP, Jamaat-e-Islami, the National Citizen Party (NCP), and among independent contenders failed to win their seats despite high expectations.

Many of those defeated have been active in politics for decades and were considered organisationally strong and locally influential, making their losses particularly notable.

In Khulna-5, Jamaat Secretary General Mia Golam Porwar lost to BNP candidate Ali Asghar Lobby by a narrow margin.

Porwar received 1,46,246 votes, while Lobby secured 1,48,854 -- winning by just 2,608 votes.

Bangladesh Khelafat Majlish Ameer Mamunul Haque contested the election in Dhaka-13 under the Jamaat-led alliance. He received 86,067 votes.

BNP backed candidate Bobby Hajjaj won with 88,387 votes, leading by 2,320 votes.

In Cox's Bazar-2, Jamaat Assistant Secretary General Hamidur Rahman Azad lost to BNP candidate Mahfuzullah Farid by more than 35,000 votes.

The wide margin surprised many, as Azad is a former lawmaker and a long-time influential figure in the area.

Moving towards the north, in Chapainawabganj-3, BNP's multiple-term MP Harunur Rashid was defeated by Jamaat leader Nurul Islam, a former president of Islami Chhatra Shibir.

Rashid won this seat even during the controversial 2018 election, making the current outcome a major upset. He received 1,27,037 votes, while Nurul secured 1,89,640.

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7 women make it to parliament

Six from BNP, one independent; total 85 women contested in this election

STAR REPORT

Seven women candidates -- six from BNP and one independent -- were elected in the 13th national election held on Thursday.

A total of 85 women contested the election this time, including 66 with party nominations and 19 as independent aspirants.

In Sylhet-2 (Bishwanath and Osmaninagar), Tahsina Rushdir Luna, wife of BNP leader M Ilias Ali, a victim of enforced disappearance, won by a margin of 79,321 votes.

Luna, the lone female candidate nominated by BNP in the entire Sylhet division, campaigned with grassroots activists loyal to her husband after facing resistance from segments of local leadership.

She dedicated the victory to her missing husband and the voters of the constituency.

"This victory comes from people's love and emotion for Ilias Ali. People voted to honour his name and expressed their respect and attachment," she said.

Luna previously received a BNP nomination in the 2018 national election, but her candidacy was cancelled at the last moment.

In Brahmanbaria-2 (Saraik, Ashuganj and parts of Bijoynagar), Rumeen Farhana was elected as an independent candidate.

Rumeen contested as a rebel candidate from BNP after she was denied the party's nomination for the seat. She was later expelled

from BNP.

Stressing that her victory belonged to her supporters, campaigners and voters, Rumeen pledged to dismantle what she described as entrenched "syndicates" behind repeated violence in Saraik.

She also said BNP leadership contacted her after her victory became inevitable.

"They suggested it would be good to sit together and even hinted that I could get something bigger than an MP post. I declined. They had expelled me. This is not my party



Tahsina Rushdir Luna, Rumeen Farhana, Shama Obaid Islam, Nayab Yusuf Ahmed



Farzana Sharmin Putul, Esrat Sultana Elen Bhutto, Afroza Khanom Rita

"I represent the people of Brahmanbaria-2 -- nearly half a million voters. My responsibility is to them," she said.

Rumeen said as a lawmaker, she would speak the truth, protest injustice and stand against corruption, regardless of who holds power.

any more," she said, adding that her politics was now entirely her own.

In Faridpur-2 (Saltha-Nagarkanda), BNP candidate and the party's central organising secretary, Shama Obaid Islam, won by a margin of 32,953 votes.

Shama said the overwhelming

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Next govt to face graft, economic challenges

Says Fakhrul; BNP to seek Hasina's extradition, says Salahuddin

STAR REPORT

BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir yesterday said the next government, to be formed by his party, will face major challenges in maintaining law and order, fighting corruption and reviving the country's economy.

"The biggest challenges for the next government will be to get the economy moving, maintain law and order, control corruption and ensure justice," he told reporters at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport in Dhaka after returning from his electoral area in Thakurgaon.

He also said the BNP, having won a majority of seats in the 13th parliamentary election, will form the next government under the leadership of party Chairman Tarique Rahman, reports UNB.

Commenting on the election results, Fakhrul described the moment as both joyous and sad. "There is joy on one hand and sadness on the other. Our late chairperson and national leader, Khaleda Zia, could not see this unprecedented victory, which is very sad," he said.

He said the election was held in a transparent manner amid a festive mood.

Asked about the election being held without the participation of the Awami League, Fakhrul said, "The Election Commission has taken the decision regarding the AL, and the party's activities have been suspended. Further decisions will depend on future political developments."

Fakhrul later went to the BNP chairman's office in Gulshan to congratulate Tarique Rahman with flowers.

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Brothers Pintu, Tuku elected MPs from Tangail

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

BNP leaders Abdus Salam Pintu and Sultan Salahuddin Tuku, who are also brothers, have won from the Tangail-2 and Tangail-5 constituencies, respectively, in the 13th national election held on February 12.

Pintu, a former BNP vice-president, has been elected MP for the third time from Tangail-2 (Gopalpur-Bhuapur), securing 1,98,867 votes, the highest in the district, defeating a rival Jamaat-e-Islami candidate.

His younger brother Tuku, BNP publicity secretary, has been elected MP for the first time from Tangail-5 (Sadar), securing 1,31,279 votes and defeating a rival Jamaat candidate.

The election of the two brothers, who were among the most persecuted BNP leaders during the previous

Awami League government's tenure, has sparked jubilation among their campaign activists and supporters.

Sources said that although the party had initially decided not to nominate two members from the same family, BNP ultimately nominated both Pintu and Tuku, considering their sacrifice and loyalty.

Pintu, also the founding general secretary of the Tangail district unit BNP, previously won from the same constituency in the 1991, 1996 and 2001 national elections.

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Army personnel check a motorcycle and examine documents of a rider in the Chankharpool area of the capital yesterday, a day after the 13th national parliamentary election, as security measures remained in place across the city.

PHOTO: MEHEDI HASAN

33 hurt in post-polls violence

STAR REPORT

At least 33 people were injured in post-polls violence between Thursday night and yesterday noon in three districts.

Of them, 25 were wounded in five incidents in Jhenidah, where election camps, houses and a press club office were vandalised.

Two groups of BNP clashed at Shirampur village under Shaikupa upazila at around 9:00am, leaving 12 people injured, said Shakil Ahmed, inspector (investigation) of Shaikupa Police Station.

Officer-in-Charge Md Jellal Hossain of Kaliganj Police Station said two separate incidents occurred in the area between 11:00am and 11:30am. "Three people were injured in one incident and four others in another," he said.

In Jhenidah Sadar upazila, rival supporters attacked homes and clashed at three separate locations between 9:00am and 11:30am, leaving six people injured, said Sabbir, sub-inspector of Jhenidah Sadar Police Station.

Earlier on Thursday night, unidentified attackers vandalised the Press Club Maheshpur office.

In Patuakhali, at least five people were injured in separate incidents of violence between BNP and Jamaat activists yesterday.

Locals and police said a group of

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