



Senior BNP leaders, including Secretary General Mirza Fakhru Islam Alamgir, congratulate party Chairman Tarique Rahman with a bouquet on the party's sweeping victory in Thursday's national election at his Gulshan office in the capital yesterday.

PHOTO: BNP MEDIA CELL

## BNP wins on Khaleda's legacy, Tarique's drive

Say party leaders, political analysts

SAJJAD HOSSAIN

BNP's sweeping victory in Thursday's national election is a result of public trust in the party's leadership, spirited campaigning, and voter disillusionment with rival Jamaat-e-Islami, according to party leaders and political analysts.

Strong public sentiment toward former prime minister and party chairperson Khaleda Zia, who passed away just weeks before the polls, together with her son and successor Tarique Rahman's campaign strategy and progressive reform agenda, are being regarded as key factors behind the landslide.

Analysts also point to BNP's prolonged struggle against authoritarian rule and its role in the mass uprising, along with support from minority communities, women voters, and a section of Awami League supporters, as decisive elements.

"Jamaat's positions on women gave rise to fear, shifting public perception toward BNP," said Prof Mojibur Rahman of Dhaka University's Institute of Education and Research.

Former Jahangirnagar University

Professor Al Masud Hasanuzzaman also noted the years of struggle endured by grassroots leaders under the previous regime and said it strengthened BNP's credibility.

"The absence of Awami League in the polls gave BNP space to consolidate its position and expand its voter base," he added.

Unofficial results from the Election Commission show that BNP alone secured 209 seats, with allies bringing the total to 212 -- a two-thirds majority that paves the way for forming the next parliament.

However, the party faced setbacks as well. The nomination of weak candidates and reports of activists engaging in extortion and reckless behaviour in the aftermath of the mass uprising caused BNP to fall short of its expected results, allowing rivals to capitalise on those constituencies.

In many seats, voters expressed dissatisfaction with local BNP candidates, yet their confidence in the party's central leadership remained a decisive factor behind the overall victory.



SEE PAGE 4 COL 8

## 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.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2



## Only 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 (Sarail, Ashganj and parts of Bijoyinagar), Rumeen Farhana was elected as an independent candidate.

Rumeen contested as a rebel candidate from BNP after she was defeated 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 Sarail.

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

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

## Youth votes propel Jamaat into opposition

MAMUNUR RASHID

Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami has emerged as the second major political force in the 13th parliamentary election, positioning itself as the principal opposition after the BNP secured more than two-thirds of the seats.

Riding on the momentum following the July uprising, the religion-based party, which has re-emerged as a new political force, has secured 68 seats on its own. Its 11-party alliance bagged 77 seats in total.

Jamaat's highest tally before this was the 18 seats it won in the 1991 election.

Its seat count would have been higher had its candidates not lost narrowly in at least 50 constituencies, according to party insiders.

"An election has taken place after many years, and there are many new voters. Compared to others, Jamaat's influence among young voters has increased somewhat. This was also evident in student union elections, where young voters supported them more," said political analyst and writer Mohiuddin Ahmad.

Also, many who might have once voted for the boat or plough symbols have voted for Jamaat this time. "That is why their vote share has increased," he added.

Furthermore, having been "persecuted" for more than one and a half decades during the AL rule, Jamaat appears to have gained greater public sympathy in the new political reality following the uprising.

Voters were also drawn by the party's organisational strength and its pledge to establish a "new political settlement" beyond the traditional AL-BNP divide.

Jamaat candidates performed particularly well in the border areas of Khulna, Rajshahi and Rangpur.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6



## Brothers Pintu, Tuku elected MPs from Tangail



OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

BNP leaders Abdu 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

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3



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

## Next govt to face graft, economic challenges

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

STAR REPORT

BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhru 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, Fakhru described the moment as both joyous and sad. "There is joy on one

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

