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'VOTE COUNT IRREGULARITIES' Jamaat threatens to take to streets

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Jamaat-e-Islami Ameer Shafiqur Rahman yesterday alleged that the results of the 13th parliamentary election were altered through "irregularities and manipulation" during vote counting, warning of street protests if the grievances are not addressed.

"Though the polling was fair, there were massive irregularities in vote counting," Shafiqur told reporters at a press conference held on behalf of the I-party electoral alliance at the party's central office in Moghbazar in the evening.

"We will seek redress from the Election Commission," he said, adding that they are "prepared to take to the streets" if the EC fails to provide the desired response.

"Elections naturally involve wins and losses, and if those occur naturally, people accept them. But if there is major discrimination irregularity, it raises questions," he said.

The Jamaat chief also alleged that there have been attacks on the homes of leaders, activists, agents and voters of the alliance in different parts of the country. "Those who engage in such wrongdoing must bear full responsibility."

It was not clear whether the party conceded defeat, and the Jamaat chief did not clarify whether they would join parliament. He declined to answer questions.

According to Election Commission figures, the BNP alliance won 212

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Due to the election holidays, the usual bustle of the capital has disappeared, leaving normally crowded flyovers almost empty. The photo was taken from the Mouchak area yesterday.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

Polls result a step closer to stability

Rating agency
Moody's says clear
mandate reduces
uncertainty

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The decisive outcome of Bangladesh's general election will help dissipate volatility that has gripped the nation since the 2024 uprising, and is "an important step toward political normalisation," Moody's Ratings said yesterday.

In an assessment, the rating agency said the victory of the BNP and its allies "could help ease political uncertainty, potentially supporting a recovery in investor confidence and a reduction in political and social tensions".

In November 2024, Moody's downgraded Bangladesh's long-term

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Theories vs facts on Jamaat leaders' narrow defeats

STAR REPORT

Conspiracy theories over some Jamaat leaders' narrow defeat have been circulating on social media since yesterday morning.

Take this example: "Why did Dr Shafiq accept election engineering? In Pirojpur-2, Delwar Hossain Sayeedi's son was handed a defeat by only 70 votes. In Khulna, Mia Golam Porwar was forced into a loss by just 2,000 votes. The number of seats where Jamaat lost by fewer than 5,000 votes is 53. Essentially, Jamaat was defeated in these 53 seats because of rigging. In reality, Jamaat won 135 seats. But the deep state is trying to reduce that number to 70-80."

Victory/defeat by less than 5,000 votes	22 seats
Jamaat, allies won	11 seats
BNP, allies won	9 seats
Others	2 seats

Dismislab, a fact-check organisation, investigated at least a dozen such posts and comments found across various social media platforms, claiming that candidates from the Jamaat alliance would have secured more seats if there were no rigging or conspiracy against the coalition.

Dismislab's analysis shows victory or defeat was determined by a margin of less than 5,000 votes in 22 seats, not 53. In these seats, the margins range from 385 to 4,702 votes.

A coalition-wise analysis of the results in these 22 constituencies shows that Jamaat and its allies won 11 seats, while the BNP and its allies secured nine. One seat was won by an independent candidate and another by Islami Andolon Bangladesh. In other words, candidates from the Jamaat-led alliance prevailed in half of the constituencies decided by margins of fewer than 5,000 votes.

When the results of all 297 constituencies announced so far (out of 300 seats) are arranged in ascending order of vote margins, the 50 seats with the narrowest margins range from 385 to 9,581 votes. Among

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1 killed, 36 hurt in post- polls violence

STAR REPORT

At least one person was killed and 36 others injured in incidents of post-election violence across the country between Thursday night and yesterday evening, amid allegations of intra-party clashes, attacks by rival groups, and vandalism.

The lone fatality took place in Char Abdullah village under Sadar upazila of Munshiganj, where a young man was beaten during a clash between rival factions reportedly affiliated with the BNP.

Md Jasim Nayeib, 30, a supporter of independent candidate and expelled BNP district member secretary Md Mohiuddin, was critically injured in the violence yesterday afternoon and later died at Dhaka Medical College Hospital in the evening.

According to police, prior tensions between rival groups in the area escalated into a violent altercation over election-related issues. At one stage, Jasim was struck on the head with a sharp weapon, leaving him gravely injured.

Munshiganj Superintendent of Police Md Menhazul Alam said both factions

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Despite a bumper mustard harvest in various upazilas of Rajshahi district this season, farmers are not getting the prices they expected. The crop is selling in local markets at Tk 2,700-2,800 per maund. Farmers say that although prices are somewhat low, the good yield will make up for it. The photo was taken yesterday in the Bagmara-Bhabaniganj area of Rajshahi.

PHOTO: AZAHAR UDDIN

'It's going to be very traumatic' for Iran

Trump warns if no nuclear deal; second US
carrier group to be deployed in ME

AFP, Washington

US President Donald Trump threatened Iran Thursday with "very traumatic" consequences if it fails to make a nuclear deal -- but Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said he was skeptical about the quality of any such agreement.

Speaking a day after he hosted Netanyahu at the White House, Trump said he hoped for a result "over the next month" from Washington's negotiations with Tehran over its nuclear program.

"We have to make a deal, otherwise it's going to be very traumatic, very traumatic. I don't want that to happen, but we have to make a deal," Trump told reporters. "This will be very traumatic for Iran if they don't make a deal."

The Pentagon has ordered a second aircraft carrier to deploy to the Middle East, US media reported yesterday.

Late last month, Trump sent the USS Abraham Lincoln aircraft carrier and accompanying warships to the Gulf as Trump ramped up threats against Iran over its deadly crackdown on anti-government protests. The vessels remain in the region.

"We'll see if we can get a deal with them, and if we can't, we'll have to go to phase two. Phase two will be very tough for them," Trump said.

Netanyahu had travelled to Washington to push Trump to take a harder line in the Iran nuclear talks, particularly on including the Islamic Republic's arsenal of ballistic missiles.

But the Israeli and US leaders apparently remained at odds, with Trump saying after their meeting at the White House on Wednesday that he had insisted the negotiations should continue.

Meanwhile, the Iranian government yesterday announced the establishment of a commission of enquiry to look into protests against the high cost of living that turned into anti-government rallies that left thousands dead.

"A fact-finding committee has been formed with representatives from relevant institutions and is collecting documents and hearing statements," Iranian government spokeswoman Fatemeh Mohajerani told the local news agency ISNA.

Israeli PM skeptical about
quality of any such deal

Iran announces enquiry team
to probe protests

The spokeswoman did not specify whether the commission would only focus on the economic demands that triggered the protests, or whether it would also investigate deaths during the protests.

"The final report will be published for public information and further legal action after the process is completed," she stated.

On Thursday, the government website published comments by President Masoud Pezeshkian saying "We have assigned teams to investigate the causes (of the unrest), without providing further details."

The protests, which began in late December before escalating on January 8, left more than 3,000 dead, according to the official count.

Jatiya Party 'crushed'

Draws blank for the first
time in polls; analysts say
party lacks 'identity'

RASHIDUL HASAN

The Jatiya Party suffered a complete rout in the February 12 polls.

For the first time since the restoration of parliamentary democracy, not a single candidate of the party secured a seat, a stunning collapse that some political analysts say signals an ominous future for the party.

Of its 196 candidates, the highest number after the BNP, Islami Andolon Bangladesh and Jamaat-e-Islami, all but 20 lost their deposits. None even emerged as a principal contender.

The party, founded by HM Ershad, was also routed in Rangpur, considered its main stronghold. In the 2024 election, Jatiya Party secured 11 seats, its previous lowest tally since its formation in 1986.

Among its heavyweights, Chairman GM Quader and Secretary General Shamim Haider Patwary both finished third in their respective constituencies -- Rangpur-3 (city corporation and Sadar) and Gaibandha-1. Both lost to Jamaat-e-Islami candidates, with the BNP candidates finishing second.

Though the party faced an uphill battle going into the polls and its leaders claimed "election engineering", analysts said the scale of its defeat reflects its eroded public connection and fading political identity.

"By aligning with Awami League over the past 18 years, Jatiya Party has lost its distinct identity," political analyst Mohiuddin Ahmad told The Daily Star.

"The party became isolated from the people by playing a role in legitimising Awami League's misuse and controversial elections," he added.

Analysts also said over the past two decades, JP has become a leader-centric party, with activists and

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NCP eyes bigger role after bagging 6 seats in debut

SHAMIMA RITA and ARAFAT RAHAMAN

Amid doubts over its political future and alliance choices, the youth-led National Citizen Party (NCP) has made an eye-catching debut, winning six seats in its first parliamentary election.

Calling the results proof of voter trust in the party, NCP leaders pledged to pursue what they called "action-oriented politics" inside and outside parliament.

The party contested 30 constituencies under the Jamaat-e-Islami-led I-party alliance in the 13th parliamentary election and won six seats, according to unofficial results. The party also claimed it received 21 lakh votes nationwide.

Party convener Nahid Islam won Dhaka-II with 93,872 votes, defeating BNP candidate MA Quayum, who secured 91,833, according to preliminary results.

Member secretary Akhter Hossen won Rangpur-4, while south organiser Hasnat Abdullah won Cumilla-4. Senior joint convener Hannan Masud won Noakhali-6, joint member secretary Abdullah Al Amin won Narayanganj-4, and joint convener Atiq Mujahid won Kurigram-2, according to the party's preliminary tallies.

Despite the victories, NCP leaders said they had fallen

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