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ইসলামী ব্যাংকিং সেবা প্রদানে 'ইসলামী ব্যাংকিং কর্ণার' পূবালী ব্যাংকের প্রায় সকল শাখা এবং উপশাখায়



## SPRING IN THE AIR

Soft sunlight filters through rustling leaves as the country slips into spring mode. In bright yellows, reds and greens, people stepped out with family and friends to welcome Pehela Falgun, carrying the scents of 'Shimul' and 'Palash' and the promise of warmer days. For many, the first day of spring is not just a date on the calendar, but a sensory ritual: flowers in the air, songs in the background, and familiar traditions that feel like home. Yesterday, from campuses to parks and institutions, programmes across the country marked the season's arrival, turning ordinary spaces into pockets of colour and joy. This year, Valentine's Day coincided with Pehela Falgun, adding an extra glow to the celebrations.

PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN, ORCHID CHAKMA, RASHED SHUMON, AZAHAR UDDIN, TITU DAS

## Major publishers warn of boycott, seek reschedule

- 36 of 37 pavilion-allotted publishers demand fair be held after Eid
- 321 publishers made similar demand Feb 8
- 14 publishers sent open letter to Tarique Rahman yesterday, reiterating call
- Publishers cite post-election uncertainty, Ramadan as reasons
- Bangla Academy says no scope to change date

MAHATHIR MOHAMMED

A large number of prominent mainstream publishers have decided to abstain from participating in Amar Ekushey Book Fair -- the country's largest book fair -- fearing economic losses due to the post-election situation and the overlap with the upcoming month of Ramadan.

At the fair, leading publishers are allocated pavilions, while others are given stalls.

This year, of the 37 publishers allocated pavilions, 36 have decided not to participate and have demanded that the fair be rescheduled to after Eid-ul-Fitr. UPL, Mawla Brothers, Ananya Prokashoni and Onno Prokash are

among them.

In a joint statement on February 8, 321 publishers demanded that the inauguration of the fair be rescheduled to after Eid-ul-Fitr.

Yesterday, 14 publishers sent an open letter to BNP Chairperson Tarique Rahman, reiterating the same demand.

To confirm stall and pavilion allocations, Bangla Academy extended the payment deadline from February 9 to February 11. However, sources said many publishers have not yet submitted their payments.

Speaking to The Daily Star, publishers expressed concern about possible instability after the national election.

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## Seat-sharing brings little for BNP

Party loses nine out of 14 seats

SAJJAD HOSSAIN

Nine of the 14 constituencies that BNP left to its partners under a seat-sharing arrangement were won by its main rivals, the Jamaat-e-Islami led IJ-party alliance.

In these seats, BNP did not field its own candidates and instructed its grassroots leaders and activists to work for its allies.

However, final results show that the strategy did not work as intended, said party leaders.

Of the 14 seats shared with allies, partners won only five, while nine were lost.

The Jamaat-led bloc emerged as the biggest beneficiary. Of the nine lost seats, Jamaat candidates won four. One each was won by the National Citizen Party (NCP) and Khelafat Majlis, both part of the Jamaat-led alliance.

Meanwhile, three seats went to BNP rebel candidates.

BNP leaders described the outcome as disappointing, saying the rivals consolidated their position in areas where



### AT A GLANCE

Total seats shared: **14**

Partners won: **5**

### NINE LOST SEATS

Jamaat **4**

NCP **1**

Khelafat Majlis **1**

BNP rebels **3**

BNP had stepped aside.

It raised questions within the party about the effectiveness of its seat-sharing strategy and grassroots coordination, they added.

One of the most notable defeats occurred in Dhaka-12.

In this seat, Saiful Haque,

general secretary of the Biprobi Workers Party and a BNP ally, received 30,963 votes.

He lost to Jamaat candidate Saiful Alam Milon, who secured 53,773 votes -- a margin of 22,810 votes.

Meanwhile, BNP rebel Saiful Alam Nirob received 29,869 votes here.

BNP leaders said that if Saiful Haque and Nirob united behind a single contender, the seat might not have been lost.

BNP allocated four seats to Jamaat Ulama-e-Islam -- the highest number given to any ally -- but none of its candidates won. BNP did not field candidates in those constituencies.

In those constituencies, one seat went to Khelafat Majlis, one to a BNP rebel, one to Jamaat, and one to the NCP.

In Brahmanbaria-2, BNP rebel Rumeen Farhana won with 1,18,547 votes. Junayed Al Habib, the candidate fielded by Jamaat, received 80,434 votes and lost by 38,113 votes.

In Sylhet-5, Jamaat

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## BNP sweeps Ctg, wins 12 of 16 seats

ARUN BIKASH DEY, Chattogram

In a major electoral shift following the February 12 polls, the BNP has emerged as the dominant force in the port city and its surrounding upazilas, securing 12 out of the 16 seats in Chattogram district.

Jamaat-e-Islami, contesting as the primary challenger in several constituencies, clinched two seats, including a hard fought victory in Satkania-Lohagara and a surprise win in Banskhali.

The declaration of the result of two constituencies -- Chattogram-2 and Chattogram-4 -- has been postponed due to the order of the court.

### THE GOHIRA PHENOMENON

Perhaps the most extraordinary highlight of the 13th parliamentary election is the record-breaking feat of a single village, Gohira village, under Raozan upazila, has sent three representatives to the national parliament simultaneously -- all elected on the BNP ticket.

Gias Uddin Quader Chowdhury (Chattogram-6), his nephew Hummam Quader Chowdhury (Chattogram-7), and Sayeed Al Noman (Chattogram-10) all hail from this politically storied village. While Gias is a veteran, for

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**The results, announced late Thursday night and early Friday, reflect a landscape redefined by the return of fair voting and the emergence of a new generation of leaders.**

## Hand in hand through darkness, 25 years on

MINTU DESHWARA

At the edge of a small market in Palkichhara tea garden under Moulvibazar's Kulaura upazila, a couple walks hand in hand every morning. For 25 years, that clasped grip has been their strength against hunger, humiliation and heartbreak.

Basmati Rani Rabidas, 45, was cast out of her family home for choosing love. Her husband, Ramnarayan Rabidas, born blind, faced a similar fate. When their relationship became known, his family also turned him away.

Their love story began along the dusty paths of the tea garden. Ramnarayan, 54, had already endured tragedy. His first wife died during childbirth nearly three decades ago. Grief left him isolated in his household.

Then he met Basmati. "We used to talk on the road to the tea garden," Basmati recalled. "But my family could not tolerate it. One day, they threw me out."

With nowhere to go, she sought



Basmati Rani and Ramnarayan Rabidas.

PHOTO: STAR

shelter in Ramnarayan's home. But his father refused to accept her. Soon, Ramnarayan too was forced out.

Since then, they have walked road of life together.

For months, Basmati lived under

a tree in the local bazar, surviving on alms. Relatives and their own community shunned them.

"I would cry and ask God why He gave me so much suffering," she said.

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## Asif alleges post-polls violence, blames BNP men

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

National Citizen Party spokesperson Asif Mahmud Shojib Bhuiyan yesterday alleged widespread post-election violence across the country, accusing BNP activists of involvement.

He said BNP leaders have remained silent over the incidents, which he claimed suggests their earlier movement was merely eyewash intended to influence public perception ahead of the polls.

He made the remarks last evening at Ibn Sina Specialized Hospital after visiting those injured in clashes on election day and in the days that followed.

Asif alleged that assaults on voters, vandalism of homes, and looting of cash and valuables were reported from different parts of the country. In one instance, he claimed, an individual was killed for voting in favour of an independent candidate.

He said they had expected firm directives to restrain party activists, along with announcements of disciplinary action against those involved.

However, no visible punitive measures have yet been taken in connection with the incidents, he alleged.

He demanded a clear statement from the BNP outlining what action it will take against any party members found responsible for the violence.

## KUSHTIA REGION Internal rifts cost BNP as Jamaat wins most seats

ANIS MONDOL, Kushtia

The BNP, poised to form the government, has lost seven out of eight parliamentary seats in Kushtia, Chuadanga and Meherpur, largely due to internal rifts, alleged land grabbing and extortion by party activists, and the nomination of unsuitable candidates.

In contrast, Jamaat-e-Islami, which had secured only two seats in the region since independence, has won seven seats this time.

**In recent times, the negative activities of BNP leaders and activists and the party's internal conflicts worked to our advantage. At the same time, our leaders' engagement with the public helped us reach the shore of victory.**

SUJA UDDIN JOARDAR, secretary of Kushtia Jamaat

The lone BNP candidate to win in the three districts is Reza Ahmed Bacchu Molla in the Kushtia-1 (Daulatpur) constituency. He, too, blamed internal division for the party's overall defeat.

"I cannot comment on Chuadanga. But in Kushtia and Meherpur, the sole reason behind the defeat of our five candidates was internal

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