

## People issued

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between these. That responsibility lies with politicians." When asked whether the party preparing to form the government – the BNP – has any legal obligation to carry out the reforms, he said that the referendum represents the will of the sovereign people.

"Therefore, all political parties, including BNP, have a moral and political responsibility," said Riaz, also the former vice president of the National Consensus Commission.

The parties should not focus only on written laws, but must seriously consider political realities.

The proposals presented in the referendum are what the people directly approved.

The BNP has always claimed to represent public wishes, so Riaz hopes the party would respect these expectations when running the country and reforming the constitution.

The political parties had already included the issues in their election manifestos, and senior leaders openly asked people to vote 'Yes'.

So, the referendum result is not just the government's agenda – it is now the agenda of the state and all political parties.

While the manifestos gave indirect approval from voters, this referendum gave direct public approval for major constitutional reforms.

"This should clearly be seen as a people's mandate,"

About priorities in implementing reforms, Riaz said it depends on how the process moves forward.

However, since there is a specific order to form an upper house of parliament, that must be completed within six months.

The ruling party and other political parties will decide the detailed priorities, he said.

"Through the referendum, a clear public mandate for reform has been expressed. Political parties are responsible for implementing it. All parties are committed to state reform. We call on the ruling party, parties represented in parliament and the constitutional reform council, and even parties outside parliament to come together through dialogue and ensure this mandate is carried out."

When asked if he would take on any new role, Riaz said he wants to return to his profession as soon as possible.

## 1 killed, 5 hurt in 5

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Zakir Hossain and rebel candidate MAH Selim at Chitabari village, a border area between Kachua and Sadar upazilas, on Friday evening.

"At one point, they [Zakir's supporters] hit my brother's head with sharp weapons. He was taken to Bagerhat Sadar Hospital and later shifted to Khulna Medical College Hospital, where he died around 11:30am today [yesterday]."

Contacted, the Bagerhat BNP Convener ATM Akram Hossain Talim, also a supporter of the party-nominated candidate, said none of their activists was involved in any such incident. "It might be a result of an internal feud between supporters of the independent candidate."

Contacted, Bagerhat Additional Superintendent of Police Md Shameem Hossain confirmed the death and said one person was detained in this connection. "A case will be filed today [Sunday] in this connection," he told The Daily Star last night.

In Feni's Daganbhuiyan upazila, Jamaat-e-Islami activist Jaynal Abedin Dulal was injured in an attack by BNP activists on Friday, after which his mother Rowshan Ara, 65, died yesterday.

Their family members said Jaynal used to live in the UAE. He came to Bangladesh recently and campaigned for the Jamaat-nominated candidate. He was attacked by BNP members in the Selonia Bazaar area and was taken to Feni General Hospital.

Speaking to journalists, Jaynal said, "My mother collapsed at the news of me being attacked. She then passed away."

The BNP's newly elected lawmaker from Feni-3 Abdul Awal Minto expressed shock at the death in a statement and pledged to bring the attackers to book.

Contacted, Feni Superintendent of Police Md Shafiqul Islam confirmed the death and said a case was filed in this connection.

In Pabna's Boraigram upazila, at least two people were injured and several houses were vandalised during a clash between BNP and Jamaat activists in Dhanaidah village yesterday.

Police and locals said tension prevailed between the two groups over the past few days since the conclusion of the election.

Md Abdus Salam, OC of Boraigram Police Station, confirmed the incident.

In Sunamganj, Emonudduza Ahmed, a leader

of Jatiya Jubo Shakti, the youth wing of the National Citizen Party, was injured in an attack by unidentified miscreants on Friday night. He is currently undergoing treatment at the Sunamganj 250-bed District Sadar Hospital.

The incident occurred at the city's Kazir Point area at around 10:30pm, said police. "The victim filed a written complaint and police are investigating," said Ratan Sheikh, OC of Sunamganj Sadar Police Station.

In Netrokona's Purbadhala upazila, Jubo Dal leader Kamal Hossain, 45, was injured in a clash between BNP and Jamaat supporters on Friday evening.

Police and locals said Jamaat men brought out a victory procession as their party's candidate won the election in Netrokona-5. When they were near Narayandahar Bazar area, they came face to face with BNP activists and locked in a clash, leaving a Jubo Dal leader injured.

"The victim filed a police complaint in this regard," said Purbadhala Police Station's OC Md Didarul Islam.

In Jashore Sadar, miscreants set fire to a bus belonging to the election coordinator of a BNP candidate in Bahadurpur (Mehogoni Tola) area early Saturday.

The bus owner, Abu Bakkar Siddiqui, was the coordinator of the BNP's newly elected Jashore-3 lawmaker Anindya Islam Amit.

Jashore Kotwali Police Station's Inspector (Investigation) Kazi Babul confirmed the incident and said an investigation is underway.

(Our Correspondents from Bagerhat, Feni, Sylhet, Netrokona and Benapole contributed to the report.)

## Tarique to call

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reiterated his call for national unity, peaceful conduct, and the rule of law, outlining priorities for rebuilding the country following his party's electoral victory.

Delivering a post-election speech before journalists at a Dhaka hotel, he also said the victory belongs to the people and pledged to work towards restoring institutions and improving citizens' lives.

Tarique also urged all political parties to remain united in the national interest, warning against divisions that could undermine democracy.

## US trade deal

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"The US will not waive the previous duty that was in place before signing the deal," said Mahmud Hasan Khan, president of the Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA).

He explained with a simple example: if a US retailer buys a T-shirt from Bangladesh for \$2, the 19 percent reciprocal tariff may be removed if US cotton or man-made fibre is used. But the export will still face the basic 16.50 percent duty. So, even with the concession, the cost of entering the US market remains high.

Another issue, according to trade analysts, is the unclear wording of the concession. Article 5.3 of the agreement says the US will create a system for "zero reciprocal tariffs", but only for a "to-be-specified volume" of imports. This limit will depend directly on how much US cotton and man-made fibre Bangladesh imports. In simple terms, the duty benefit is not unlimited – it is tied to the amount of raw materials Bangladesh buys from the US.

This effectively means that for every dollar of tariff the US removes, the benefit goes back to its own cotton producers.

"We are waiting for clarification as we need further interpretation of how this method will work," Khan told The Daily Star, noting that many details remain unclear.

Mohammad Abdur Razzaque, chairman of the think-tank RAPID, said the agreement text is "full of ambiguity" and "not well negotiated".

He warned that the deal appears to be a strict trade-off: Bangladesh gets tariff relief only if it uses American raw materials. He also pointed out that it is still unclear whether the full waiver applies to garment accessories, or whether those items will face separate tariffs.

The geopolitical risks are also significant. Analysts warn that if India receives the same "cotton clause" benefits, Bangladesh could lose its competitive advantage in the US market. "If India gets the same benefit, Bangladesh may not remain in a strong position in the US market,"

said Razzaque.

For Bangladesh, the path remains perilous. If the government can clarify the textile clause, the country may still benefit. But if the system proves too complicated, or if competing countries receive similar terms, the much-celebrated deal may offer little real protection for Bangladesh's garment industry, according to analysts.

## Cabinet secy

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Administration issued a notification yesterday appointing M Siraz Uddin Miah, principal secretary to the chief adviser, to the additional charge of cabinet secretary. Earlier, the ministry had cancelled Rashid's contract.

The cabinet secretary, the highest-ranking official in the republic, oversees the entire process of a new government's swearing-in and is also responsible for conducting the oath-taking ceremony.

Many in the administration have expressed surprise at his resignation just two days before the next government takes office.

After Muhammad Yunus's interim government took charge, Rashid was appointed secretary of the Secondary and Higher Education Division on a contractual basis.

On October 14, 2024, he was appointed cabinet secretary on a two-year contract.

## Yunus thanks

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calm environment across the country during the polls. He first spoke with Tarique and congratulated him on his party's victory with an overwhelming majority.

The CA then congratulated Shafiqur and Nahid for their success and thanked them for their responsible roles in the post-election period.

He expressed hope that the political parties would continue to play a cooperative and positive role in the future to uphold the democratic process.

He also called on them to work together in unity to meet the expectations of the people.

## US readies

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nuclear program, after Trump amassed military forces in the region, raising fears of new military action.

US officials said on Friday the Pentagon was sending an additional aircraft carrier to the Middle East, adding thousands more troops along with fighter aircraft, guided-missile destroyers and other firepower capable of firing attacks and defending against them.

Trump, speaking to US troops on Friday at a base in North Carolina, said it had "been difficult to make a deal" with Iran.

"Sometimes you have to have fear. That's the only thing that really will get the situation taken care of," Trump said.

Asked if he wanted regime change in Iran, Trump responded that it "seems like that would be the best thing that could happen." He declined to share who he wanted to take over Iran, but said "there are people."

"For 47 years, they've been talking and talking and talking," Trump said after a military event at Fort Bragg, North Carolina. "In the meantime, we've lost a lot of lives while they talk. Legs blown off, arms blown off, faces blown off. We've been going on for a long time."

Asked for comment on the preparations for a potentially sustained US military operation, White House spokesperson Anna Kelly said: "President Trump has all options on the table with regard to Iran."

"He lists to a variety of perspectives on any given issue, but makes the final decision based on what is best for our country and national security," Kelly said.

The Pentagon declined to comment.

The United States sent two aircraft carriers to the region last year, when it carried out strikes against Iranian nuclear sites.

**PRAYER TIMING**  
FEBRUARY 15

Fajr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN 5:25	12:45	4:30	5:57	7:15
JAMAAT 6:00	1:15	4:45	6:01	7:45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

## Major publishers warn

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Monirul Hoque of Ananya Prokashoni said there was uncertainty about the situation following the parliamentary polls.

Ramadan is expected to begin on February 17, subjects to sighting of the moon. Publishers fear turnout will be low as people will spend time on iftar, Taraweeh prayers and other religious observances.

Mazharul Islam of Onno Prokash said it can be easily anticipated that the turnout will be low during Ramadan.

The number of students, who are a major part of the fair's audience and also work part-time at many stalls, may also decline, as educational institutions usually close weeks before Eid, he added.

He questioned, "How will the staffers at the stall manage to work while fasting?"

However, if the Ekushey Book Fair continues to take place in February as per tradition, the next three editions of the fair will also be held during Ramadan.

Adarsha Prakashani Publisher Md Mahabubur Rahman said around 280 stall-holding publishers have announced they will abstain, fearing financial losses.

"Every publisher is suffering economically, more or less. If the book fair is held from February 20, over three hundred publishers will not take part in it," he added.

He also alleged that pavilion allocations were being given beyond regulations to continue the fair without mainstream publishers.

Mahabubur said publishers submitted memorandums and letters to relevant authorities, including Bangla Academy, the Ministry of Cultural Affairs and the chief adviser's office, requesting rescheduling.

Several publishers, requesting anonymity, alleged that new publishers were being allocated pavilions and stalls without approval from the book fair committee and in violation of seniority rules.

"A dangerous precedent is being set. Later, they will claim these allotments as a 'legal right', paving the way

for chaos and litigation," said a publisher.

This "frantic rush" to fill empty slots will jeopardise the fair's business environment and the entire publishing ecosystem, said another publisher.

Responding to the allegations, Bangla Academy Director General Mohammad Azom said stall and pavilion allocations are reviewed annually based on standards among applicants.

Also, there is no scope to change the scheduled date, as the proposal came after preparations were well underway, he told The Daily Star.

Azom said numerous government approvals had already been obtained, and significant expenditure had been made.

He also denied that the date was chosen arbitrarily, saying it was decided in the presence of publishers and approved unanimously by the book fair committee.

"Every decision has been made in the presence of a large number of publishers of the book fair committee, and this time, even more publishers were included in the committee than in previous years," he said.

Earlier, Bangla Academy had announced that the 2026 Ekushey Book Fair would begin in December last year, considering the election and Ramadan, but later reversed that decision.

## Mujibur leads

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Victoria High School, said, "Removing his posters immediately after the election is a commendable step."

According to the district election office, Mujibur secured 1,70,877 votes. His nearest rival, Sheikh Noor-e-Alam Hamidi of Bangladesh Khelafat Majlis (rickshaw symbol), got 50,204 votes.

Among other candidates, BNP rebel Mohsin Mia (Football) got 33,911 votes; Pritam Das of Jatiya Nagorik Party (Shapla Koli) received 4,875; Md Abul Hasan of Bangladesh Samajtantrik Dal (Moi) secured 969; and Mohammad Zarif Hossain of Jatiya Party (Plough) got 910 votes.

## BNP sweeps Ctg, wins 12 of 16 seats

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Humam and Noman, this marks a successful debut in parliamentary politics.

"It is a rare honour for our village," said Shahadat Hossain, a local resident, noting that Gohira's legacy now spans generations of the Chowdhury and Noman families.

Contacted, Gias Uddin Quader Chowdhury said Gohira has long been a fertile ground for the country's political history.

"This is not the first time several candidates from our village have won at once," he said. "In a previous election, a total of six lawmakers from this village represented the same parliament."

"It's a matter of pride for us," he added.

Meanwhile, the victory of Nurul Amin in Chattogram-1 (Mirsarai) has become a local legend of perseverance. Amin, who started his political career as a ward member of Osmanpur union in 1998, defeated Jamaat's Mohammad Saifur Rahman by a margin of 44,261 votes.

Amin, a former upazila chairman who was removed by the previous regime in 2014, received 1,28,799 votes.

"The people of Mirsarai have seen my work from the union level to the upazila. Their trust is my only strength," Amin said after being declared the winner.

**MAIDEN WINS, URBAN MANDATES**  
This election saw the rise of several new faces who converted their first-

time candidacies into parliamentary seats.

In Chattogram-5 (Hathazari), Mir Mohammad Helal Uddin, son of BNP Vice Chairman Mir Mohammad Nasir Uddin, won decisively with 1,47,054 votes.

In the city's Chattogram-10 constituency, Sayeed Al Noman secured 1,22,978 votes, riding on a campaign that focused on environmental protection and culture, which resonated strongly with the urban middle class. He is the son of late BNP leader Abdullah Al Noman.

For Humam Quader Chowdhury, the win in Chattogram-7 (Rangunia) was a convincing entry into the Jatiya Sangsad. He bagged 1,01,445 votes, defeating his nearest rival, Jamaat-e-Islami's ATM Rezaul Karim, who received 41,719 votes.

In contrast, the most nail-biting finish was witnessed in Chattogram-14 (Chandanaish). BNP candidate Jasim Uddin Ahmed, a former upazila chairman making his first run for parliament, faced significant internal friction and a strong challenge from the II-party alliance.

Despite the controversy surrounding his nomination, Jasim emerged victorious with 76,493 votes, edging out LDP's Professor Omar Faruque (75,467 votes) by a razor-thin margin of just 1,026 votes.

**BNP'S BANSHKHALI BLUNDER**  
The biggest upset for the BNP occurred

in Chattogram-16 (Banshkhali), a constituency the party historically won in 1996, 2001, and 2008.

Jamaat's Zahirul Islam (93,167 votes) capitalised on a fractured BNP base to defeat official candidate Mishkatul Islam Chowdhury (83,105 votes), where Mishkatul faced a strong challenge from rebel candidate and former union chairman Leyakat Ali.

Leyakat's 55,071 votes effectively split the BNP base, allowing Jamaat to claim the seat for the first time. Analysts also pointed toward Jamaat's disciplined door-to-door campaigning since August 2024 as a deciding factor.

Idris Miah, convener of Chattogram South District BNP, admitted that the presence of rebel independent candidate Leyakat Ali, who drew over 55,000 votes, was the deciding factor.

"Although the party high command expelled Leyakat, expulsion does not always bring the solution," Idris told The Daily Star. "If the party could have made him withdraw his candidacy, our candidate would have surely won."

In Chattogram-15 (Satkania-Lohagara), as expected, Shahjahan Chowdhury of Jamaat-e-Islami maintained his dominance.

A former ameer of the party's city unit and a tested veteran, Chowdhury secured 1,72,061 votes, defeating BNP's Nazmul Mustafa Amin by over 45,000 votes.

## Internal rifts cost BNP

FROM PAGE 3  
conflict within the party. Besides, they were also misled after expecting votes from Awami League supporters."

A similar view was expressed by Zakir Hossain Sarkar, the defeated candidate from the Kushtia-3 (Sadar) seat and member secretary of Kushtia district BNP.

"There were problems within our party. At the beginning, many did not join the campaign. Some even opposed the candidates as their preferred leaders were not nominated," he said.

Talking to at least 50 general voters across the Kushtia region, it was found that leaders and activists of the winning party, Jamaat-e-Islami, visited them five to six times. In contrast, many voters said BNP leaders did not reach out to them even once. They appeared indifferent to both victory and defeat.

Bottail, a suburban village under Kushtia Sadar upazila, lies just six kilometres from the town. In an area called Shishir Math in that village, several residents, including Sharif, Zahir and Salma, claimed no one came to seek their votes.

Abu Bakar Siddique, head of the BNP media cell formed during the election campaign, said there was resentment among party leaders and activists over the district, upazila and union committees formed after August 5. That frustration was reflected in the election results.

Since independence, Jamaat had won only once in the Kushtia-2 (Mirpur,

Bheramara) constituency in the 1986 election. This time, the party secured three seats in the region.

Asked about the reasons behind the success, Suja Uddin Joardar, secretary of Kushtia district Jamaat-e-Islami, said, "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. Broadly speaking, these three factors played a major role in our win."

Obaidul Haque, a teacher at Islamic University, said campaigning often plays a crucial role in elections.

"Perhaps this time Jamaat leaders and activists were able to reach more voters and communicate their goals effectively. Ultimately, voters made their choice. Beyond that, I do not see any sweeping reason," he said.

## Political

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aside divisions and the outcome of the election, carried a positive political message.

"We are all from the same area. In the interest of development, we will work together for peace and order in the area, regardless of party or opinion, and will provide all-out support to the newly elected candidate," he said.

In Kishoreganj-3 constituency, Farruk received 1,12,466 votes while Jihad got 1,02,476.

**Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh**  
Bangladesh Police  
**Rapid Action Battalion-7**  
Patenga, Chattogram  
[www.rab.gov.bd](http://www.rab.gov.bd)

**Invitation for e-Tender (Re-Tender)**

For financial year 2025-2026, e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal ([www.eprocure.gov.bd](http://www.eprocure.gov.bd)) for the procurement of:

Sl	Tender ID No. & Reference No.	Description of goods	Last selling date & time	Closing/opening date & time
1.	1226521, RAB-7/7453/Q/RAB/Part-1/565 Date: 05 Feb 2026	High Quality Local Mashur Dal	22 Feb 2026 09:00	22 Feb 2026 12:00

This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted.

To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP System Portal ([www.eprocure.gov.bd](http://www.eprocure.gov.bd)) is required. The fees for downloading the e-Tender documents from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered bank branches.

Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk ([helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd](mailto:helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd)).

Tenderer having clarity requirements are requested to contact at 01777-710705 (Assistant Director, Quartermaster).

  
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