

# People's mandate

By A Staff Reporter

President Hussain Mohammad Ershad, the Jatiya Party nominee, has been voted to the presidency in the country's third presidential election held on Wednesday with a massive mandate from the people for his policies and programmes.

President Ershad had huge margin of 2,02,38,844 votes over his nearest rival Mohammadullah (Hafez Huzar).

In his assured landslide victory, President Ershad polled 2,17,17,774 votes, steadily building up his runaway lead over the rivals ever since the beginning of the counting of ballots.

Of the total of 4 crore 91 lakh 2 thousand 443 votes 2 crore 57 lakh 7 thousand 423 voters cast their votes. Of these President Hussain Mohammad Ershad received 2 crore 17 lakh 7 thousand 774 votes and the rest by eleven other candidates together.

The closest contender of President Ershad, Mohammadullah (Hafez Huzar) had polled 14,78,930 votes. Lt Col. (Retd) Syed Farook Reehman was in third place, having secured 11,73,723 votes. Votes polled by other candidates are: Oliul Islam (Sukku Mia)—1,34,193, Al-Haj Maulana Khairul Islam Jessori—1,23,223, Al-Haj Maj (Retd) Mr Afsar Uddin—1,11,542, Mohammad Ansar Ali—1,16,923, Mohammad, Khalilur Rahman Majumder—73,417, Md Abdus

Samad—1,14,124, Md Choudhury—88,502, Lar (Retd) Moazz Choudhury—1,56,223. The massive "plough", the election of President Ershad, the people's eagerness with the Govt ensuring continued stability and self-reliant economic growth, the country demonstrated the

27 courses to provide knowledge of Chama and Tripura non-Tribal government posts in Tracts region. An official had BSS.

On successful of the courses, certificates distributed to 552 of whom 320 in in Marma and 67 dialects. All the arranged in the quarters of Rang darhan and Approximately 94 of the total Tribes speak in these dialects.

## Gramin B branches in Pabna

From Our Correspondent

PABNA, Oct. 16: ches of Gramin Ban up in three upadial Pabna district recee

According to off a total of Tk. 76,00, tributed among the folk as loan through ches during the last

The loan amount bursed for the purp bilitating the unen distressed women a ing them self-relia their livelihood.

It is also learnt t was given for poul shing of paddy, works and run y shops.

## Leaders greet Ershad

Leaders belonging to different organisations on Thursday congratulated President Hussain Mohammad Ershad on his resounding victory in Wednesday's presidential election, reports BSS.

Describing the country's third election as a historic occasion they said that it would usher in a new era of the country's march toward democracy.

Bangladesh Mukti Joddha Sangsad congratulated the President on his massive victory.

Alhaj Md. Gias Uddin, Bir Protik, Secretary General, Central Command Council of the Sangsad, called upon the President to see to it that the people of the country could enjoy their democratic rights and the country could move ahead along the democratic path in the spirit of the Liberation War.

Mr M.A. Hye and Sayeed Tareek, acting Chairman and acting Secretary General of Janadai, in a joint statement expressed their thanks to the people for giving their overwhelming verdict in favour of President Ershad in the presidential poll.

They said that the successful holding of the presidential election marked the opening of a new horizon in the history of democracy.

They criticised the "negative attitude" of some opposition parties and noted that the country's transition to democracy was hampered by their undemocratic acts.

The Fisheries and Livestock Minister, Mr Sirajul Hossain

Contd. from page 1

# Let's work for



President H.M. Ershad, flanked by Prime Minister Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury (right), Information Minister Tajul Islam, addressing a Press conference at Banga bhaban.

Photo: Al-Haj Md. Zakirul

## Let's work for better tomorrow

Contd. from page 1

the revolutionary programmes launched by his Government in past years that benefited the teeming millions in the rural areas would further be strengthened.

"With peace and stability achieved (through the polls), we can take programmes to achieve our objectives", the President said.

One of the objectives is to attain food autarky in five years, the President said.

He emphasised the need to change the administrative system which the country inherited from the past. It was not adequate enough to meet the needs of the society. He disclosed that measures would be taken to remove the impediments to administration so that the fruits of independence could reach the people.

BSS adds: Replying to a question, President Ershad said, "I am not unhappy about the election and the turnout of votes to my assessment is around 50 to 55 per cent. Turnout is bigger in rural areas than in urban areas as paid hoodlums created reign of terror in some cities and towns".

He said he was satisfied with the election because it was held despite the threat given by some opposition political parties to foil the poll.

"I am happy that the right of franchise of the people has been upheld through the polls and constitutional process for establishing an elected government was completed fulfilling my pledges to end Martial Law", he said.

Attired in light dark suit, the President was flanked by Prime Minister Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury, Information Minister Anwar Zahid, Irrigation and Flood Control Minister Anisul Islam Mahmud and Press Adviser to the President Mr. Tajul Islam.

He told a questioner that it was self-contradictory on the part of the opposition political parties to allege rigging in the poll because they themselves had said earlier that there was no mentionable candidate against him. Since the independence of Bangladesh, it had become a tradition to blame the winner by the losing party of rigging the poll, he said.

In this context, President Ershad cited example of such allegations raised by Dr Kamal Hossain who had lost to President Sattar by 8 million votes in 1981 presidential poll. His party led by Sheikh Hasina at that time threatened to launch movement against the government for rigging the poll, he said adding: even Mohammad Toaha who polled only 74 thousand votes brought similar charges against the then government.

He said Election Commission was the only competent authority to probe into any complaint of rigging in the poll. He said to his knowledge no presidential candidate had so far lodged such official complaint.

## PEOPLE THANKED

The President said, "I told my people that I will hold the election to establish democracy and redeemed my pledge to the nation". He thanked the people for their spontaneous participation in the election and make it a success.

He felt that the Armed Forces should be associated with national thought process and their suggestions regarding national issues be heard. "The Armed Forces do not want any political role or berth in the cabinet. Their role will be decided by the Jatiya Sangsad", he said.

Replying to a question on the foreign policy of Bangladesh, President Ershad said, "We are on the right course having excellent relations with all including our neighbours. As a developing country, our policy is friendship to all malice to none".

The President sought cooperation from people of all walks of life to continue national march ahead to the path of attaining self-sufficiency in all spheres of national life in a peaceful and stable democratic order.

## Leaders greet Ershad

Contd. from page 1

Khan congratulated the people and the Jatiya Party members, for participating peacefully in the presidential elections.

The Minister, who is also a member of the Jatiya Party presidium said, that the people had now paved the way for establishing a democratic government and were happy to break the present political stalemate.

Mr Khan noted, that even though the opposition had called hartal on Wednesday excepting Dhaka, there were no reports of any unpleasant incidence anywhere else in the country.

He expressed his surprise citing opposition claims that only one per cent of the voters turned up for the vote, whereas it was no different from any previous experience. The fact was no one paid any heed to their call, he stated.

The nine-party Ganu Oikya Jote leader Mr. Abul Khair Mohammad Shamsul Huda, who withdrew his candidature in the election in favour of President Ershad, congratulated the people for holding peaceful poll.

He said the victory of President Ershad was the victory of the 10 crore people.

Bangladesh Federation of Teacher's Associations (BFTA) expressed its gratitude to Allah

the Almighty for successful completion of the process of transition to democracy initiated by President Ershad.

The federation leaders congratulated President Ershad for his massive victory.

Convener of Bangladesh National Awami Party (Fazlul), Mr A.K.M. Fazlul Huq, in a statement welcomed President Ershad and said his victory would consolidate national independence and sovereignty and promote the politics of development.

The President and the General Secretary of Vikrampur Baul Shilpi Samity, Mr Serajul Islam Khan and Mr Harun-Rashid Mollah, congratulated President Ershad for his thumping victory in the poll.

Chairman of Sangjukt Khudra Babasayee Market Federation, Syed Kutubuddin, President of Mahanagari Fal Babasayee Bahumukhi Hawkers Samabay Samity Limited, Mr. Kalu Mia, the Chairman and the Vice Chairman of Dushtha Shishu Kalyan Sangstha, Mr Shishu Huq Bhuyian and Ms Parul Rahman Kalyani, in separate statements congratulated President Ershad on his landslide victory in the poll.

# President Ershad

istration and above all its own democratic value in the October 15 polls.

The polls result, though appeared academic after some time, people remained glued to their TV and Radio, to ascertain the extent of landslide.

The landslide victory on which the result will end up when all the results are compiled was not a surprise. It was clear rejection of the politics of threat and disorder and reflects the popular choice for the continuity of peace and stability built painstakingly over the past four years for building of "Notun Bangla".

The presidential election-1986, incidentally is the fulfilment of the pledge by President Ershad about the restoration of democracy in the country.

The process of transition to democracy started with the elections to the local bodies with a special focus on the upazila system of decentralisation of administration. These elections were followed by a national referendum and election to National Parliament. The process concluded with the holding of presidential polls after a determined efforts by the Government.

Political circles think, now that the presidential poll is over, the Parliament will be called into session soon to be followed by the passage of the Ratification Bill and the full withdrawal of Martial Law and revival of the suspended Constitution.

# tomorrow

By A Staff Reporter

President Hussain Muhammad Ershad on Thursday pledged to invest all his energies for a "better tomorrow" during his term as civilian President.

Enunciating objectives of his programmes for the next five years, President Ershad told a crowded post-election press conference at Bangabhaban that efforts would be made to democratise the government, reduce the poverty create more employment through broadening the industrial sector, invite private and foreign investment and continue with privatisation programme to improve the quality of life.

President Ershad said the presidential polls would give the country "required peace and stability in the political field to attain the objective of economic emancipation."

President Ershad said that the Martial Law would be withdrawn immediately after the approval of the Ratification Bill on four and a half years

moned within 14 days after the President takes oath of office. And the President takes oath of office on the next day of the publication of the official result of election. "It would take a couple of days" the President hoped.

The President did not specifically say when the Martial Law would be withdrawn but observed that he was eager that it was withdrawn early.

Asked on support of two-thirds majority which the ruling Jatiya Party did not enjoy, President Ershad expressed the hope that the opposition parties which went to Parliament with slogan for ending Martial Law would lend the due support. "They know that the M.L. would be prolonged if the bill is not ratified", the President said.

The President hoped that the section of political parties which did not participate in the polls realised their mistakes. "I am certain the Parliament members of that party will participate in the Jatiya Sangsad."

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