

Rigging, violence mar polls

One killed, 150 injured, polls postponed at 38 centres

Staff Correspondent

THE capturing of polling stations, widespread ballot stuffing, snatching of ballot papers and intimidation of rivals by ruling Awami League activists marked the first-ever partisan elections to 234 municipalities on Wednesday when a man was killed and 150 were wounded in violence.

Reports from different municipalities said that supporters of AL candidates and those of Bangladesh Nationalist Party or rebel AL candidates clashed throughout the day as local administrations in most cases report-

Total municipalities: 234			
Result available until 4:00am: 126			
AL/AL rebel	BNP/ BNP rebel	Others	Elected unopposed
98/ 10	13/ 2	15	7 (AL)

edly showed indifference to violence and irregularities.

Voting at 38 polling centres of 18 municipalities was postponed because of violence and fraudulence in casting votes, officials said.

The Election Commission postponed entire elections to Madhabdi municipality in Narsingdi on allegation of irregularities.

Until evening, neither comission officials nor the

local administrations could give any estimate of turnout of voters although the polling ended at 4:00pm.

At least 33 mayoral candidates including 18 of BNP boycotted the polls halfway through alleging widespread irregularities, including stuffing ballots and driving out their polling agents by AL activists.

Law enforcers at places had to fire bullets to control

the situation, but most of the places members of law enforcement agencies were found indifferent to the capturing of polling stations.

AL activists captured many polling stations at around 70 municipalities as the polling began at 8:00am without presence of polling agents of the BNP candidates at many municipalities.

Violence, ballot stuffing, intimidation and driving out of polling agents of opposition candidates were reported from many areas including Satkania, Mirsarai, Sitakunda, Raujan and Chandanai in Chittagong, Barrura in Comilla, Kalkini in

Madaripur, Islampur, Jamalpur sadar and Sarishabari in Jamalpur, Narsingdi sadar and Madhabdi in Narsingdi, Gaibandha, Bhaluka and Gafargaon in Mymensingh, Haziganj and Faridganj in Chandpur, Syedpur in Nilphamari, Ulipur in Kurigram, Chawnhuri in Noakhali, Nagarjanka in Faridpur, Bajitpur in Kishoreganj, Sujanagar and Irshwardi in Pabna, Akhaura in Brahmanbaria, Barguna, Kuakata in Patuakhali, Ramganj in Lakshmipur, Swarupkati in Pirojpur, Moulvibazar, Bhupur, Copalpur and Madhupur in Tangail, Sailakupa in Shenaidah.

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