



BANGLADESH AWAMI LEAGUE

23 Bangabandhu Avenue, Dhaka

Election of Deception and Farce **Statement by the People's Leader Sheikh Hasina**

“There were no voters at the polling stations, yet there were votes on the counting tables!”

On 12 February, the nation witnessed a pre-planned election of deception and farce - one that will be recorded as a disgraceful chapter in Bangladesh's democratic history. This was not an election of public will; it was an industrial-scale administrative exercise in manipulating numbers.

The total number of registered voters in this election was 127,711,793. Voting began at 7:30 a.m. and continued until 4:30 p.m. Serious irregularities were observed, both in the conduct of voting and in the turnout percentages released in stages by the Election Commission, many of which appeared inconsistent and unrealistic.

According to the Commission's first briefing, by 11:00 a.m.—the first 3 hours and 30 minutes—14.96% of votes had been cast, equivalent to 19,105,684 ballots. That would mean an average of 90,979 votes per minute.

In the next briefing, turnout by 12:00 noon was announced as 32.88%. That means between 11:00 a.m. and 12:00 noon alone, 17.92% of votes were cast—22,880,350 ballots—an average of roughly 381,339 votes per minute. This rate is several times higher than the earlier average and is highly abnormal. During the first 3.5 hours, the hourly turnout rate was 4.27%, yet in the following hour it was shown as 17.92%. If all 32,789 polling centres were operating, this would imply an average of 11.63 votes per minute per centre—one vote every 5.16 seconds—which is practically impossible.

Anyone familiar with Bangladesh's voting history knows that turnout typically moves fastest in the morning, especially before 11 a.m. Yet only 14.96% turnout was recorded during that period, followed by a sudden leap to 32.88% by noon—an abnormal surge within a single hour.

At the third stage, it was reported that turnout reached 47.91% by 2:00 p.m., meaning that between noon and 2:00 p.m. it increased by 15.03%, or 19,194,883 votes—about 159,958 votes per minute.



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Finally, by 4:30 p.m., turnout was declared to be 59.44%. That means between 2:00 p.m. and 4:30 p.m.—2 hours and 30 minutes—another 11.53%, or 14,722,770 votes, were added, averaging roughly 98,152 votes per minute.

According to various media reports, casting a vote at some centres took between one and a half to nearly three minutes. Yet the time-based statistics show that turnout increased at an unusually rapid rate between 11:00 a.m. and noon.

The overall vote count presented by the Election Commission does not match the reality reported across the country—empty polling stations, inactive booths, and absent voters. Among roughly 86,000 prisoners eligible to vote, only about 5,000 did so (around 3%). Among an estimated 15 million expatriate voters, about 500,000 voted (around 7%). In this context, the claim of nearly 60% turnout is not just unrealistic but laughable.

State resources and government machinery were directly used to promote the “Yes” vote. The government itself openly assumed responsibility for campaigning in favour of “Yes.” On the ballot paper, a tick mark beside “Yes” and a cross beside “No” represented a blatant psychological tactic aimed at influencing voters and controlling public opinion. The absence of signatures other than the presiding officer’s on result sheets further indicates a lack of transparency.

Although constituency-wise results of the national election were announced over an 18-hour period, constituency-level results of the referendum held the same day were not published. The referendum results were released almost five hours after the national election results. This delay, combined with numerical inconsistencies in participation, has created a clear perception of vote rigging among the public.

The delay in publishing referendum results raises a crucial question: did the Election Commission process the data, or did it adjust the data to fit a predetermined process? This question is now being asked across all sections of Bangladeshi society—and it is both relevant and legitimate.

This election did not pave the way for restoring democracy; rather, it has deepened public distrust, skepticism, and political uncertainty. Results declared through a controversial process can never bring stability to a country.



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On the eve of voting, 11 February, incidents of violence and clashes occurred in various parts of the country between the Bangladesh Nationalist Party and Jamaat-e-Islami. Reports emerged of weapons recoveries, vote-buying, and arrests. That evening, there were reports of polling centres being seized, ballots being stamped in advance, and other irregularities. In several centres, presiding officers signed result sheets before voting even began. Many voters who went to cast their ballots found that their votes had already been cast. In some places, groups of four or five women were seen stamping ballots together inside private rooms; in others, men were doing so. Hundreds of pre-stamped ballots were recovered. Some centres had multiple polling agents representing the same candidate. Attempts were made the previous night to prepare result sheets and collect polling agents' signatures in advance.

On election day itself, clashes, crude bomb explosions, centre seizures, ballot snatching, coercion to vote for specific symbols, fake voting, counting irregularities, and even presiding officers stamping ballots for particular candidates were reported nationwide.

During the tenure of the Awami League, the BNP voluntarily boycotted two elections and even announced efforts to resist them through arson and violence, causing loss of many lives. In contrast, the Awami League did not boycott elections; rather, it was illegally banned and forcibly excluded from this one. Even so, the Awami League did not call for violent resistance or destruction. It appealed to the people to peacefully boycott this one-sided election, and the public responded by not turning up to vote. That is why the illegal government of Muhammad Yunus had to inflate turnout figures through manipulation.

Under this illegal Yunus administration, this rigged and one-sided election has robbed people of their voting rights. Therefore, the demand of Bangladesh's 180 million people today is to annul this voterless, illegal, and unconstitutional election; ensure the resignation of the murderous fascist Yunus; withdraw false cases and release all political prisoners, teachers, journalists, intellectuals, and professionals; lift the suspension imposed on the Awami League's activities; and restore the people's voting rights by holding a free, fair, and participatory election under a neutral caretaker government.

**Joy Bangla
Joy Bangabandhu
Long live Bangladesh.**