



Odhikar observes elections in four city corporations

Odhikar

On June 15, 2013 elections were held in Rajshahi, Khulna, Barisal and Sylhet City Corporation. Odhikar observed elections in four city corporations. Each observation team had five mobile observers. Although no major violations were marked, elections in four City Corporations concluded with some irregularities at the polling centres. It was learnt from the observer teams of Odhikar that polling agents of all candidates were not present in the polling centres observed by Odhikar. Adequate numbers of police force were deployed in the electoral area in order to control law and order situation.

Rajshahi City Corporation

Odhikar's election observation team observed 20 polling centers out of 137 centers in Rajshahi City Corporation. In Shahid Nazmul Hoque Girls High School center of ward no. 17, supporters of counselor candidate Ziyaul Hoque Tuku and Robiul Islam Milu got involved in clashes. One of the supporters of counselor candidate Rabiul Islam Milu was injured. At around 10.00 am in the morning, supporters of Mayoral Candidate AHM Khairuzzaman Liton and Mosaddek Hossen Bulbul tried to influence the voters. At that time, BGB had charged with batons and two persons named Moniruzzaman and Mukul were injured. Electronic Voting Machine (EVM) was used in seven polling booths of Lakkhipur Bohumukhi Adorsho High School centre of Ward 8. After 4.00 pm, one of EVM broke down.

Khulna City Corporation

Odhikar's election monitoring team monitored 12 polling centers out of 228 in Khulna City Corporation. In Crescent Aliya Madrasa polling center, many voters, including Badsha Miah, Tarikul Islam Dobir and Md. Khalilur Rahman informed Odhikar that, at around 8.00 am, supporters of the Islami Shasontntro Andolon supported Counselor candidate Hafej Md. Shamsul Alam (symbol-Moon) were walking on the rail line. At that time, a team of RAB on duty charged with batons on them. As a result some people were injured and nine were arrested. At around 11.40 am, one of the injured men named Md. Shah Alam Sardar (worker of Crescent Jute Mills) died in a private hospital. Meanwhile, protest spread among Shah Alam's colleagues. Outside the No. 174 Provati Railway Government Primary School polling center of Khulna Sadar, clashes took place between

RAB and voters. In this incident, two persons named Nazrul and Mujibur were injured. A person named Aziz was injured in a baton charge of police while he was trying to create a disturbance outside the Rupsha Bohumukhi High School polling center.

Barisal City Corporation

The election monitoring team of Odhikar observed 19 polling centers out of 100 centres in Barisal City Corporation. In Rumatoli Primary School center of ward 24, an argument and clash took place between supporters of Awami League supported Mayor candidate, Shawkot Hossen Hiron and supporters of Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) backed Mayor candidate, Ahsan Habib Kamal. Former Member of Parliament, Abul Hossen and Ahsan Habib Kamal were injured during the clash. It was learnt that a person with a fake election observer accreditation card was forcing the voters to vote for Ahsan Habib Kamal with the symbol 'Pineapple'. At that time the supporters of Shawkot Hossen Hiron protested and then a clash occurred between the two groups. Presiding Officer, Ashraful Kabir stopped polling at around 1.40 pm as the situation went out of control. It was learnt during observation that, Shawkot Hossain Hiron allegedly beat a polling agent of Ahsan Habib Kamal in Kawnia ward 2 and forced him to leave the polling centre.

Sylhet City Corporation

Odhikar's election observation team observed 43 polling centers out of 127 centers in Sylhet City Corporation. An Assistant Presiding Officer named Lutfunnesa was withdrawn from the polling centre for providing false ballot papers to the voters of Awami League backed Mayor candidate, Badar Uddin Ahmed Kamran in Khasdobir Government Primary School Center. In Ambarkhana Girls School center at ward 4, 10 voters could not cast their votes. One of them is Rubel Ahmed. His national ID no. is 9196204133295. Furthermore, allegations of distributing money was found against Ward 5 Counselor candidate, Juber Khan and others.