

2016

9th UP Election Observation Report



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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS:

AL	: Bangladesh Awami League
BNP	: Bangladesh Nationalist Party
CBO	: Community Based Organization
CSO	: Civil Society Organization
DW	: Democracywatch
ECB	: Election Commission Bangladesh
EO	: Election Officer
EWG	: Election Working Group
EMT	: Election Monitoring Team
LG	: Local Government
MDG	: Millennium Development Goal
MP	: Member of Parliament
NGO	: Non-Government Organization
PNGO	: Partner NGO
PS	: Polling Station
PO	: Presiding Officer
APO	: Assistant Presiding Officer
RO	: Retuning Officer
PO	: Polling Officer
PA	: Polling Agent
RPO	: Representation of the People Order
RAB	: Rapid Action Battalion
BGB	: Board Guard of Bangladesh
STO	: Short Term Observer
UNO	: Upazila Nirbahi Officer
UP	: Union Parishad
UZP	: Upazila Parishad

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Democracywatch (DW) would like to acknowledge and extend special thanks to all those who participated in and made the observation of the Union Parishad election possible. We are also profoundly grateful to the Election Commission of Bangladesh (ECB) who has given permission to observe these Elections on mobile basis.

We are grateful to DW Management and Staff, for their continued support and guidance, and for participating in the observation exercise. We also appreciate the role played by DW- Monitoring team in planning and implementing the observation exercise. The Election Monitoring Team (EMT) effectively participated in and managed the entire observation exercise.

We acknowledge all our Observers for their dedication and commitment towards the observation exercise. We deeply appreciate our observers for their diligence, commitment, and hard work in monitoring and observing the pre-election environment; and for the identification, recruitment, and mobilization of the observers in their respective Constituencies. Their commitment and hard work of the Observers was instrumental in ensuring an efficient and reliable observation and recording of electoral data on polling day. The data and information collected and compiled by the District Coordinators has significantly supported the compilation of this report.

Finally, we wish to thank the Election Commission of Bangladesh (ECB) for accreditation Cards and vehicle approval Democracywatch to observe the UP Elections and for the support and cooperation we received during the exercise. We particularly wish to thank Democracywatch Election Team for their hard work, support and cooperation during the Union Parishad Elections.

Taleya Rehman
Executive Director

Democracywatch and Its scope of Observation: Democracywatch is an independent, non-profit, non-partisan civil society organization that shares a common commitment to free and fair elections, good governance, and the achievement of higher standards of democratic process and practice in Bangladesh since 1995.

Democracywatch is registered as an election monitoring organization with the Election Commission of Bangladesh (ECB). It has observed all general, bi and local elections since its inception.

Union Parishad Elections: The Legal Framework

Article 11 of the Constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh provides that 'The Republic shall be a democracy in which fundamental human rights and freedoms and respect for dignity and worth of the human person shall be guaranteed, and in which effective participation by the people through their elected representatives in administration at all levels shall be ensured'. Article 59(1) of the Constitution states that, "Local Government in every administrative unit of the republic shall be entrusted to bodies, composed of persons elected in accordance with law."

Local government elections were always held on a personal basis but the Government of Bangladesh, for the first time in its history, decided to conduct local bodies' elections on a political party basis. For this purpose, they amended the Local Government (Union Parishad) Act-2009 on 21 November 2015 to remove the legal barrier to conducting UP elections on a partisan basis.

Union Parishad Elections 2016: The Key Aspects

Election Administration: Similar to parliamentary elections, the union Parishad elections are conducted by the ECB. It recruits Returning Officers (ROs), Assistant Returning Officers (AROs) and other polling personnel and provides training to them. The selection of polling stations and the provision of security at the polling stations are also the responsibility of the ECB.

Union Parishad Election 2016 was 9th and the largest local government election in countries history. Election Commission of Bangladesh (ECB) has declared the schedule of Union Parishad Election 12 February 2016. The Election Commission has been conducted six phases election. Firstly Election commission schedule declared 4275 UPs, but ECB has conducted 4104 UPs out of 4275 UPs. The election started on 22 March 2016 end of 4 June 2016 in Bangladesh.

A number of 68,133,257 voters have franchised their voting rights in Union Parishad Elections which are significant in contributing participatory and meaningful elections at grassroots level.

Democracywatch has been observing all national and local elections, by-elections and re-elections from its inception in 1995. In this connection Democracywatch observed UP elections 2016 in Bangladesh. We apprehend that the scope for abuse in the electoral process is high and manipulation may hinder the fairness of holding a free and neutral election under a political government. While the issues of the local government and the debates on it are the common discussion of public, eventually Union Parishad Election becomes crucial. These make Democracywatch concern about monitoring the upcoming UP election. A number of 45 observers were deployed in 173 unions in 10 districts. Democracywatch regular staffs are observation in election as mobile basis.

Democracywatch selected a random sample of 35% polling stations observations out of 1,557 polling stations, 173 Unions in 19 Upazilas in 11 districts. Democracywatch Observers covered approximately 560 polling stations, carrying out day long observation of the polling process and vote counting procedures in the sample polling stations observed. Finally Democracywatch observers also conducted pre and post election surveys in a selected number of unions. Consolidated data from pre and post election observation and election-day monitoring presents a comprehensive overview of the administration of UP elections in Bangladesh.

Objective of Democracywatch Election Monitoring Program

The Specific objective of Democracywatch election monitoring was to ensure the fairness of the electoral process including electoral laws and regulation, voter campaigning, voting process and vote counting. The goal of Democracywatch was to build public confidence in the integrity of the electoral process and to legitimize the result of a competitive election.

The organization monitored the UP election 2016 to achieve the following objectives:

- To encourage large-scale participation of voters in the election by building confidence on the electoral process.
- To detect election fraud, manipulation and irregularities.
- Deter irregularities, intimidation and undue influence in election.
- Ensure peoples' all-out participation, especially women and new voters in the electoral process.
- Ensure free, fair, meaningful and participatory election.

Organizational Structure for Election Monitoring: Democracywatch is a non-partisan and credible organization at all levels. The election observation network involved a young and efficient monitoring group supported by the national secretariat located in Dhaka. The organization recruited 10 district coordinators and 45 observer's and 10 Team leaders were work in Election Day process.

Methodology of the Observation:

As a part of its core mandate, Democracywatch planned to observe general electoral activities In each of the municipalities, a statistically significant number of Short Term Observers (STOs) were deployed. Democracywatch prepared and trained 45 STOs for observing election-day from First to six phases. In accordance with Democracywatch deployment policy, the locations of observers in polling stations were assigned using a random sampling technique from the complete list of polling stations prepared and gazetted by the ECB. All observers received a full day's training, with many observers having previous experience in observation activities. Democracywatch election day observation activities were comprehensive, covering: (i) Preparation and opening of the polling stations; (ii) Voting operations and procedures; (iii) Closing and counting; and (IV) Voting environment in and outside of the polling stations.

All the observers went to their designated centers with Democracywatch observation forms. The mobile observers were on duty from 8:00 am till 4:00 pm. During this time the team leaders of each group performed the following duties

- Filled up the quick impression survey form and sent to Democracywatch by 12:30 pm on Election Day. Democracywatch produced 180 quick impression survey reports during the poling day
- Monitored at least 5 pooling centers and filled up the check list and sent to District Coordinators by 4 pm. Democracywatch observers filled up the 1035 checklists with special care.
- Democracywatch observers observed counting process in 110 unions to oversee the accountability and transparency in counting system.

An overall election monitoring report was received from the field, and also by mobile, and telephone. Some incidents were reported from the mobile observers directly and most of the reports came as a completed checklist comprising 21 questions. The staff of Democracywatch collated the data, checked with the observers and then made data entry for writing the report.

Stakeholder Consultation

Organizing an election entails a constant process of communication. One of the most useful and effective forms of communication is consultation between the EMB and other stakeholders. Key stakeholders in any election should include the following:

- The electoral management body itself.
- The media, including both editors and senior management, and ordinary journalists.
- Political parties and candidates.
- Non-governmental organizations, especially those responsible for election observation.
- Representatives of voters themselves, such as community organizations.

Unfortunately, ECB, before the announcement of the election schedule, the Commission did not organize any consultation with political parties, media, NGOs and community organizations. Before announcement of the schedule, ECB reviewed the security situation and the discussed about probable dates of elections with the law enforcing agencies and officials with different ministries. After announcement of the schedule, representatives from few political parties, delegations of pro-BNP and Pro-AL professionals met the CEC/EC, but no formal discussion was held after the announcement of the election schedule.

The Voter List

The ECB used the voter list updated in 2015 and published on December 2015. As per this list total number of voters of Union Parishad was 68,133,257 respectively. The number of female 33,841,143 and male 34, 292, 11 4voters are in 4104 unions all over country.

Area of Observation

Democracywatch observed UP elections in 10 districts on mobile basis. Gangachhara Upazial in Ranpur District, Nilphamari Upazila Sadar in Nilphamari District , Birampur, Ghoraghat, Nababganj, Hakimpur upazila in Dinajpur District, Ullahpara Upazila in Nilphamari District, Jessore Sadar and Monirampur Upazila in Jessore District, Pabna Sadar Upazila in Pabna District. Mymensing Sadar and Fulpur Upazila in Mymensingh Sadar Upazila and Sreepur Upazila in Magura District, Tangail Sadar and Mahdupur Upazila in Tangail District and Narail Sadar Upazila and Lohagora Upazila in Narail District.

Mobile Observation Form

The Democracywatch observers used checklist, which called mobile observation form. This form comprising questionnaires that duly filled up by the observers. The observers oversee the basic information of union, Security arrangements, election materials, election environment, electoral process, election code of conduct and counting process.

Democracywatch used form for pre-election survey, post election survey, mobile observation checklist and compilation form to observe this elections on mobile basis.

Data entry and analysis

The Democracywatch observers filled up the mobile forms and send it to the team leaders. Team leaders used another forms and consolidated it properly. Then they send it to District Coordinator. District Coordinator sends this form to the Democracywatch. The staff of the national office put entry in computer in every incident. After this process a group of workers report the incidents and facts of the UP elections.

Accreditation of Democracywatch observers

Permitted by the Election Commission of Bangladesh (ECB), Democracywatch received accreditation cards for mobile observers in each polling station of the country. Democracywatch observers received 45 cards and 15 vehicle permission across the country. They observed the opening of the poll and the complete voting process. Some of them observed counting process.

Election related violence (national wide)

The organization also tracked the election related violence from the print media under the print media five national dailies were monitored which are: Ittefaq, Prothom Alo, Bangladesh Protidin, Manabjamin and Daily Star.

A group of skilled personnel scanned the news on a daily basis and made their reports. A total of 142 people were killed among them 136 people were and 6 in children and 11602 (app) injured in Union Parishad Election related violence noted from 12 February 2016 to 20 June 2016.

Across the country massive violence irrupted during the pre-election campaigns, these intensified and were also observed during the election days in different Unions. In some places violence continued after the election. Following table illustrates the frequency of some of the incidents:

	Pre and Post-Election	Pre and Post-Election	Election day
Phase	Injured	Killed	Killed
1 st	2660	10	11
2 nd	1680	11	9
3 rd	2882	17	5
4 th	1285	10	8
5 th	1836	23	15
6 th	1331	18	5
Total	11602	89	53

The total of 142 persons was killed in 45 districts out of 64 Districts. Heights number of 8 were killed in Chittagong and 7 were killed in Perojpur District and rest of the districts where no people killed like Lalmonirhat, Nilphamari, Kurigram and Dinajpur of Rangpur Division, Naogaon and Chapainababganj Districts of Rajshahi Division, Meharpur, Chudanga, Khulna and Satkhira Districts of Khulna Division, Tangail, Rajbari, Shariyetpur and Gopalganj District of Dhaka Division, Moulavibazar district of Sylhet Division and Laxmipur, Khagrachori, Rangamati and Bandorbon Districts of Chittagong Division.

The Total Number of 60 persons were killed BAL between BAL, 23 persons were killed member candidates between member candidates, 15 persons were killed by law enforcing agency and 12 persons were killed BNP between AL and 4 persons were killed during preparing the making boom and heart attack and rest of persons were killed in election violence.

The report mentioned defeated candidates intolerant mentality, altercation between supporters of the chairman and member's rival candidates, bid the capture vote centers, previous political conflicts, stopping the election at the eleven hour, uncontrolled attitude of the winning candidates, supporters and establishing supremacy in the areas as the reasons behind the violence. Violence occurred during election campaign and attack on winning candidates family members.

The report mentioned that the violence took place between supporters of two rival candidates and between the supporters of winning and defeated candidates, clash occurred to snatch ballot box, police men's baton charging and opening fire to stop violence.

Use of Children and Adolescent on Election-Day by Candidates:

Democracywatch observed use of children and Adolescent in electoral activities on election-day in 157 Unions of Nilphamary, Dinajpur, Pabna, Sirajganj, Tangail, Mymensingh, Gaibandha Jessore, Narail, Magura and Rangpur Districts which covered 4 Divisions of Bangladesh. Democracywatch STOs following a set of checklists covering 6 specific categories related to use of children and adolescent in electoral activities by candidates in 560 Polling Stations.

According to Checklist questionnaire, we setup six categories (Voter slip distribution, Easy access in Polling Stations, Working as a Polling Agent, Begging vote, Food serving for Polling Agents and Leaflet distribution) of children uses in election campaign. We found minimal use of children and adolescent in electoral activities in. Candidates used children and Adolescent in distributing, voter slip, leaflet and begging votes adjacent to 282 and 205 and 127 Polling Stations respectively on election-day. Though candidates deploy children and Adolescent as a polling agent 42 but used them to serve food and snacks for polling agents in 91 polling stations out of 560. Besides, children and Adolescent had easy access in and outside of polling stations including polling booths in 69 polling stations out of 560 of DW observed Unions. See the Table-1

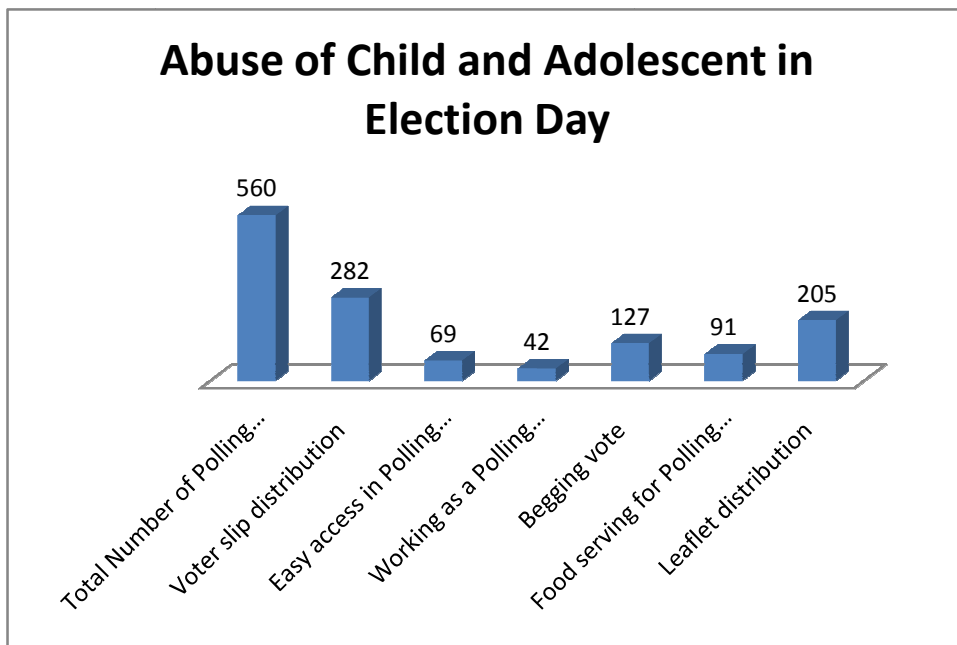


Table-1: Abuse of Child and Adolescent in Election Day

District	Name of Upazila	Number of UPs	Total Number of Polling Stations	Voter slip distribution	Easy access in Polling Stations	Working as a Polling Agent	Begging vote	Food serving for Polling Agents	Leaflet distribution
Nilphamary	Nilphamari Sadar	15	45	25	6	3	4	5	10
	Ghoraghat	4	15	6	0	0	2	1	6
Dinajpur	Nababganj	9	22	10	3	2	3	2	7
	Hakimpur	3	25	12	4	3	4	4	9
	Birampur	7	20	10	3	2	5	3	7
Rangpur	Gangachara	9	36	15	2	2	7	8	9
	Pabna Sadar	10	40	22	5	4	10	8	15
Sirajganj	Ullapara	13	40	18	4	3	12	6	11
	Tangail Sadar	8	25	14	2	1	6	5	10
Magura	Madhupur	6	40	17	5	3	8	5	12
	Magura Sadar	13	25	16	2	3	8	6	10
Narail	Shreepur	8	25	14	5	2	7	4	15
	Narail Sadar	13	40	22	5	4	10	8	15
Jessore	Lohagara	12	40	21	7	3	9	6	17
	Jessore Sadar	15	40	18	4	2	11	5	15
	Monirampur	17	36	12	4	3	6	3	12
Mymensingh	Mymensingh Sadar	5	25	19	6	2	9	6	14
	Fulpur	5	12	6	1	0	3	4	7
Gaibandha	Gaibandha Sadar	1	9	5	1	0	3	2	4
	11	18	560	282	69	42	127	91	205

(Table-1: Abuse of Child and Adolescent in Election Day)

Election Day observation

To observe the situation at the opening and closing of polling stations on the Election Day of the 2016 Union Parishad Elections, DW observers were present from 07:15 am onwards at their designated polling stations and beginning from the opening of the polling station, they used prescribed observation checklist to closely monitor the electoral process and to provide a strong civil society presence and voice on the credibility of the elections. The DW observers provided real-time reports back to DW control room throughout the day, where their responses were aggregated into a database to provide a comprehensive view of issues relating to inclusiveness and the credibility of the process undertaken as described in the proceeding sections.



Poll Opening

During the opening, DW observers reported that 92 percent of the polling stations opened on or before 8:10 am. While in 8 percent of the polling stations were reported to be open by 8:10 am. DW observers reported that preparations prior to the commencement of voting were generally adequate: as reported by the presiding officer.

Voting Operations

Following the opening, DW observers provided information on voting operations on Election Day by sending their responses against the questions set in their designated checklists. As observed during opening, security seals were attached properly on all ballot boxes in most of the polling stations.

Election environment: Almost all the centers we observed had a festive environment the voters were enthusiastic wherever we went. Many voters came a long distance to vote. Outside the polling stations the environments in most places were extremely peaceful. There were not seen any tension despite the presence of large number of voters, particularly female voters with their children. But a



very few incidents marred the polling process for a while in a few centers.

Polling Process: DW observers has observer the polling process in 560 Polling stations. They observed elections in 173 union's under 18 Upazilla's of 10 districts. The observers saw most things directly related to the polling process. The observers have checked the official seal by the election authority, secrecy of the polling booth, neutrality of election officials and many other things related to elections.

Role of the election officials: A positive aspect reported by the mobile observers that most of the election officials performed their job properly. Democracywatch believes that they have

done a great job for building public confidence in the electoral process. According to Democracywatch observers most of the polling station opened in time. In most polling stations all over the Country the presiding officers and polling officials were present and approached their tasks diligently although a lack of training was sometimes apparent while discharging their duties. In dealing with Democracywatch observers they were so cooperative and willing to help. In a few instances the Presiding Officers did not allow our observers to oversee the voting and counting process.

Voter Turnout: Democracywatch observers reported that there were large numbers of voters present in front of all polling centers. Many female voters were seen with their children, implying a safe environment. Minority voters belonging to religious minorities were seen in all polling stations such as Jessorer, Narail, Pabna, Magura, Nilphamari and Mymensing and other places, exercising their franchise without fear or intimidation.

Observers were the witnesses of a record turnout of over 70% of voters. Long queues were seen in most polling stations ally over the country even before the polling began at 8 am. The voters maintained discipline despite having a long wait.



Polling Materials: The polling materials such as ballot paper, ballot box, stamp, and other materials related to elections were adequate. Most of the presiding officers expressed their satisfaction in this regard. But a few made complaints about it. In some places like Mymensing, Comilla, Keraniganj presiding officers complained about the low quality of indefinable ink. Voters faced some difficulties due to this.

Polling Agents: Democracywatch observers reported the presence of a considerable number of polling agents appointed by the candidates. Some party agents appeared to be untrained and had no knowledge of what they were supposed to do. These agents often lacked reporting forms and did not understand the complaints procedure but some were certainly brilliant.

Election Camps: The election camps were seen in most of the polling stations. The camps were helpful to the election officials and voters to run the activities smoothly.



Polling Station/Booth Accessibility: DW observers reported that the access to the polling stations were generally good (easily accessible) for the old, disabled, the visually impaired and those who required extra assistance to cast their vote.

Security arrangements: The security arrangements in polling stations were generally adequate and created confidence among the voters. In every places the police, Ansar, Women Ansar, VDP and some BGB (Border Guard of Bangaldesh) performed their duties honestly and dedicatedly. According to our observers the law enforcement agencies were more or less neutral.

Observers' Access: DW applied for accreditation for 80 observers. After scrutinization, the Election Commission Bangladesh (ECB) approved 45 applications, however then only issued 45

cards and 15 vehicles strikers. DW 10 observers were not allowed to observe counting. One DW observers were beaten in Ullapara while undertaking their work.

Level of Efficiency in Union Parishad Election

The level of efficiency was seen very high in this election. A significant number of law agency forces were present in this regard. Election officials were present in time. All kind of election materials such as ballot boxes, ballot paper, seal, indelible ink were seen in every polling stations except a few. Polling started in every polling station in time.

Disable voter's and aged voters cast their vote peacefully. Disable observers didn't face any kind of obstruction. In some cases Democracywatch observers helped them for collecting data and information in the polling centers. Voters who were present in the boundary they cast their vote peacefully.



Level of Fairness in Union Parishad Election: This is very significant that this election was held some error. The law agencies authority made very important role in this regard. In addition voter list were free from objection in most of the cases. In this election it is also very interesting that our observers were not seen any vehicles which used for taking observers except a very few. Even most of the voters cast their vote without facing any hurdle. It is also interesting that local observers made very useful role in these elections. General people trust them and due to their presence they cast vote without any fear. It is mentionable that secrecy of polling booth existed in all polling booths except a few.



Election officials, polling agents also made very useful role in this election. Even counting process was free from any untoward situation though some of our observers were not allowed to oversee the counting process. Some of our observers were present in the outside of polling station on the eve of counting. Generally our observers were not faced heavy hurdle or much obstruction from anywhere except a few. In overall analysis indicate that the election was held peacefully and difficult face ECB and political party candidates.

Democracywatch observers noticed the following irregularities in Election Day from 22 March to 4 June 2016.

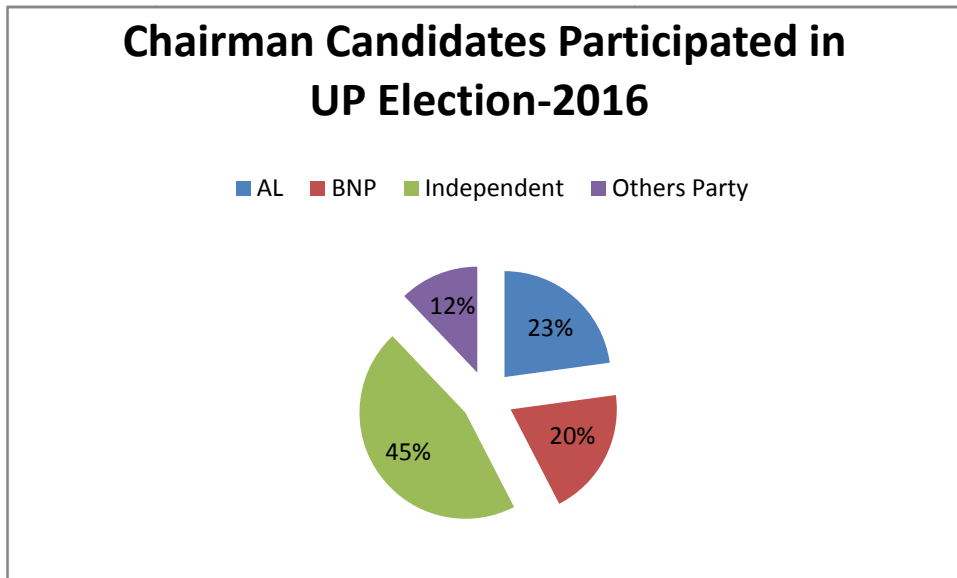
Upazila and District	Union	Specific Incidents Reported
Hakimpur, Dinajpur	Alihad	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presiding Officer shut Jangail Government Primary School Polling Station of Alihad Union following the clash between AL and JP supporter 1t 10 O'clock. It was remain closed 30 minutes. • Pro-government Chairman candidate made congenial situation hard
Jessore Sadar	Churamonkathi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In cooperation with presiding officer pro government activists captured the polling station rigged vote and at 10.00 o'clock. At 10.30am, presiding officer closed voting activities while supporters of independent candidate protested. • Presiding Officer of Khidirpur govt. primary school closed the polling station following the tension between member candidates at 10.30 at the morning.
Jessore Sadar	Chachra	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Golap Bisay (65) a hawker killed Vaturia Govt. Primary School Polling Station in a gun battle between supporters of member candidates at 11.40am. 19 other injured in this incident. Voting was closed following the incident
Jessore Sadar	Basundia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A group of supporter of pro-government candidate attacked on Ghuni Govt. Primary School Polling Station. This polling station remains closed from 10.00am- 12.00pm for the violence.
Jessore Sadar	Fatehpur	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Voting activities was postponed in Chandpara govt. primary school polling station because of blasting hand grenade at 8.45am at the morning.
Pabna	Goyeshpur	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporters and agents of ruling party candidate forced voter to give vote to their candidate.
Pabna	Ataykula	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In Kuriamora govt. primary school polling station, miscreants rigged vote in favor of Boat simble. No agents of other candidates found in the polling station
Pabna	Malanchi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No agents of other candidates found in the polling station
Pabna	Maligacha	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No Permission (Observer) counting process by Executive Magistrate.
Ullapara, Sirajganj	Purnimagati	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 voters couldn't franchise as it is done before they reported at Puthia govt. primary school polling station.
	Bangala	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 voters couldn't franchise as it is done before they reported at Bangala govt. primary school polling station.
	Udhunia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pollining station located in small building Datta Khara Govt. Primary School Polling Station. Booths were also congested in compare with

		voters.
	Durganagar UP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sudden tension rose at 2.10 pm in Hemontopur govt. primary school polling station. Supporters of chairman candidates rushed each other with local arms. One of the observers of DW injured in this incident.
Mymensingh Sadar	Bororchar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clash between member candidates was seen in Bororchar-karimganj emdadul ulum madrasah polling station. Children are use in electoral campaign. Pro-govt. chairman candidate shown his power in the polling station.
Mymeningh Phulpur		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In Maticapur Registered Primary School at Rahimganj union under Fulpur Upazila of Mymensing clashes took place between the supporters of rival candidates at 11:30. At least 7 people were injured at that time.
Lohagora, Narail	Kashipur UP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 voters were seen in a booth simultaneously in Boshupoti Govt. Primary School.
Lohagora, Narail	Naldi Union UP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In Mithapukur govt. primary school polling station, more than one booth was seen in one small room. Frequent movement of candidates into the polling station with supporters. Tension rose out-side of polling station.
Lohagora, Narail	Lahuria UP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More than one booth in one small room and tension out-side of polling station was seen in Dinnathpur govt. primary school polling station.
Lohagora, Narail	Noagram UP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A man was punished BDT1000 due commit vote rigging in Noagram govt. primary school polling station. • 4 voters couldn't franchise at Arpara govt. primary school polling station.
Lohagora, Narail	Digholia UP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 booths in two small rooms at Kola Govt. Primary School. • Polling station is not well decorated and not looked like a voting center.
Nilphamary Sadar	Chapra Samarjani	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Polling booth was set in field of East Chapra Samarjani government primary school polling station because of sufficient building.
Tangail Sadar	Baghil UP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Common people frequently entered Vatkura Ebtadae Madrasah polling station, Kumulli namdar khanpara primary school polling station, Shivapur govt. primary school polling station.

Chairman Candidates Participated in UP Election-2016 (National wide)

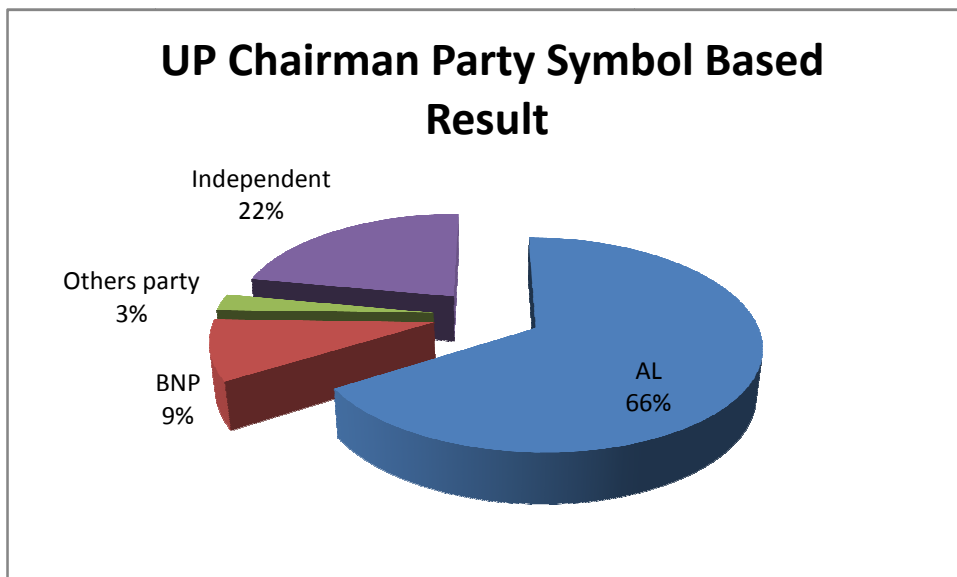
Local government elections were always held on personal basis but Government of Bangladesh, for the first time in its history, decided to conduct local bodies' election on political party basis. For this purpose, they amended Local Government (Union Parishad) Act-2009 in 21 November 2015 to remove legal barrier to conduct UP Election on partisan basis.

A total number 18,007(app) chairman candidates contested in Union Parishad Election-2016 over all Bangladesh out of 4104 UPs. Among them Bangladesh Awami league (AL) 4104, Bangladesh Nationalist Party 3548, Independent 8184 and Others Party 2184.



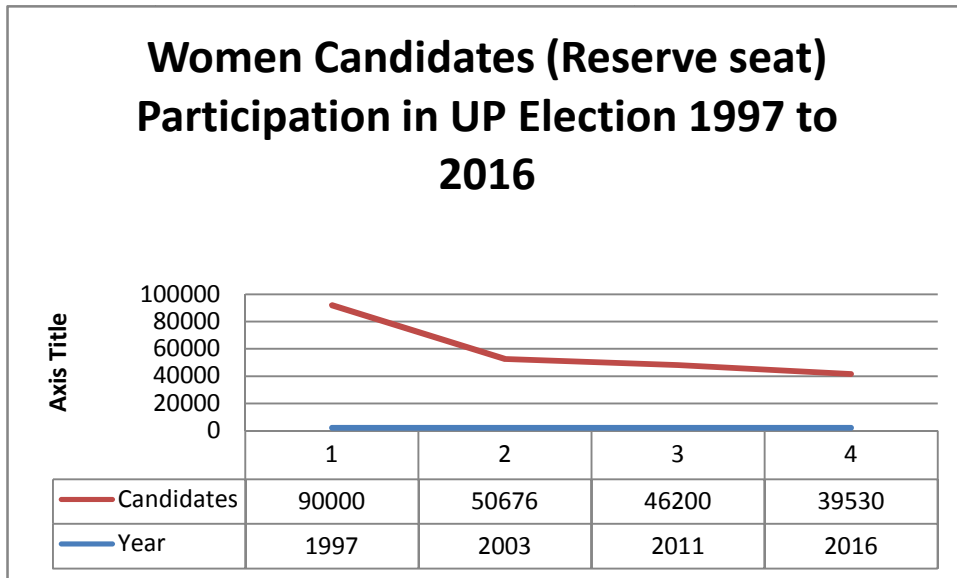
UP Chairman Party Symbol Based Result:

9th Union Parishad Election held in six phases that was started from 22 March to 4 June 2016. In that election AL got 66.12% vote, BNP 9.3%, Others Party 2.59% and Independent 22%.



Women Candidates (Reserve seat) Participation in UP Election 1997 to 2016

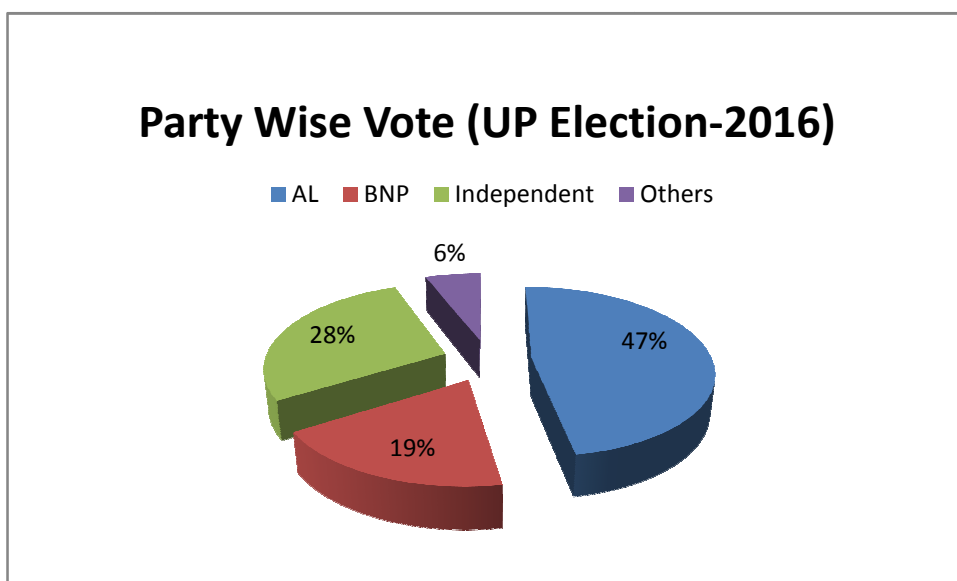
In 1997 women candidates directly participated in Union Parishad Election. Before that it was selection system election. A comparative statistic on Women candidates in election system of Union Parishad is given below.



Party Wise Vote (UP Election-2016)

As soon as the election ends different calculation, debate, and analysis are being discussed everywhere. A number of numeric analyses are presented in the following list:

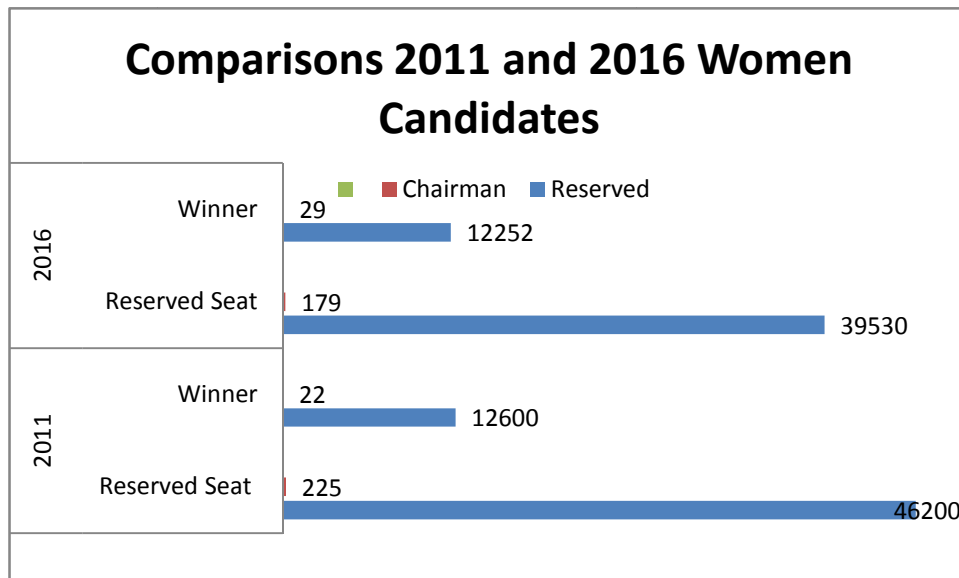
According to the election results Bangladesh Awami League (BAL) received 47.28 percent vote, which is 28.50 percent more than Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) 18.78 percent and Independent candidates 28.13 percent and other party 5.81 percent vote received.



UP Election Women Candidates Results analysis-2016

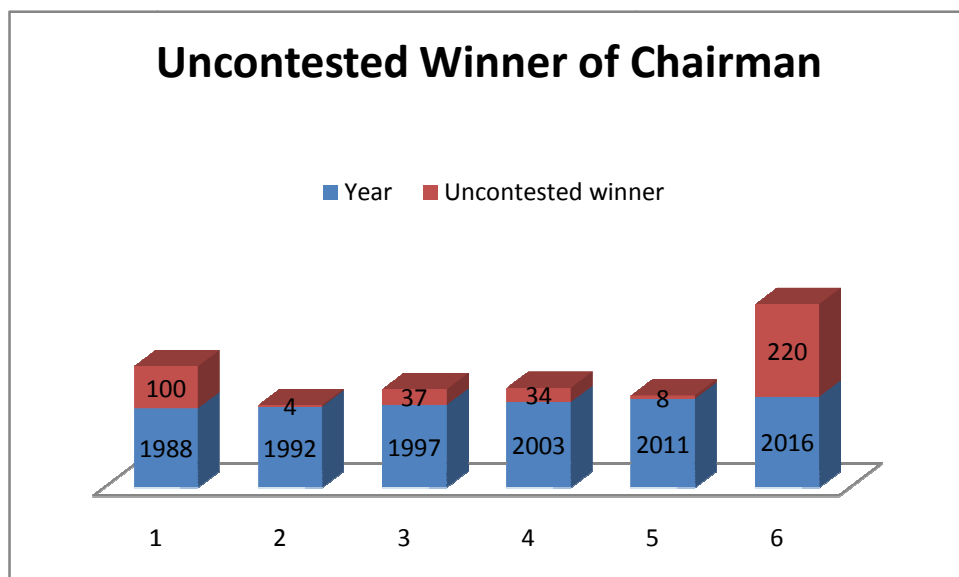
Comparisons 2011 and 2016 Women Candidates

	2011		2016	
	Candidate	Winner	Candidate	Winner
Reserved seat	46,200	12,600	39,530	12,252
Chairman	225	22	179	29



Uncontested Winner of Chairman

A total number of 220 Chairmen's won without contested first time in the history of Union Parihard-2016 in Bangladesh. Second largest uncontested winner of UP election was seen in 1988, when 100 won without contest.



Overall Observation

- Local government elections were always held on personal basis but Government of Bangladesh, for the first time in its history, decided to conduct local bodies' election on political party basis.
- Information gap about Election related issues between ECB central office among Local and District. For that reason local and district office faced challenges.
- Total Number of 104 UPs election result was held out of 4104 UPs in Bangladesh.
- ECB and local election offices monitoring system was very poor in 9th UP Elections.
- A total number of 220 Chairmen's won without contested first time in the history of Union Parishad-2016 in Bangladesh.
- In Election Day killed: 53 and after and before killed: 89 this is first time in UP election history due to Political election.
- Huge number of violence election campaign period, Election Day and post-election a total number 11602 persons were injured during election period.
- A total number of 556 BNP UP Chairman's candidate were absent out of 4104 UP in 2016
- ECB has taken a remarkable initiative for submitting nomination paper in two areas one of the concerns Upazila and District headquarter.
- Chairman candidates of ruling party couldn't submit the nomination paper of 19 Unions of Bandarban district in the second phase election of UP as a result the election was rescheduled at six phase of UP election.
- Democracywatch deployed a number of some women observers to observe the elections. As they came from a different union, they had to leave the polling station early in order to return home. Due to this consequence the women observers could not observe the counting process.
- In order to ensure comprehensive monitoring Democracywatch selected some hard to reach unions where the risk of manipulations are high. It is difficult and expensive to travel there from one to another union. Due to resource constraint we could not provide our observers adequate support to observe those places.
- Usually all the public transports remain closed on the Election Day. As the observers have to monitor a different union apart from his/her residence, they always have to travel on the day. Sometimes the observers experienced problems to return home.
- The Presiding officers, Assistant returning officers and members of law enforcing agencies receives poor honorarium to conduct the elections, which is not encouraging and indirectly affects the election process.

Recommendations

Democracywatch observed all the elections since 1996. When observing the 9th Union Parishad elections our observers made some recommendations for Election Commission of Bangladesh to improve the existing electoral process to ensure free and fair election in the country. The recommendations are as follows:

- Democracywatch believes that Election Commission and local administration should maintain close coordination in conducting an election.
- The numbers of women's booths should be increased in each polling station for quicker voting process, as women take longer time to cast vote.
- Election Commission should arrange long term training for the presiding officers and polling officers.
- Special booths for disabled and aged should be set up in the polling stations preferably on the ground floor.
- More information to the voters to be given at the centers.
- Polling stations should be located closer to the voters.
- Election Commission and Election monitoring organizations should arrange Civic Voter Education Campaign at National level to let people know about the role and responsibilities of voters.
- District Election Office and Upazila Election office should arrange candidate consultation meeting on election activities and role of candidate's behavior.
- Given the importance of the political party agents' roles in the polling stations and lack of skill and understanding, it is strongly suggested that they must be well trained on their role and activities on Election Day.
- Strong implementation and monitoring of Wall Writing Act-2012 by ECB.
- Deploy female polling officials for all female polling booths
- Allow stationary observer at each polling station and allow at least one observer in the counting room.
- ECB should strongly monitor children's participation in the pre-election campaigning, during election campaigning and Election Day activities violating code of conduct.
- Candidates should be aware of not to use of children and adolescent in electoral activities.

A short quantitative analysis on six Phases UP Election-2016

<i>Election Phase</i>	<i>1st Phase</i>	<i>2nd Phase</i>	<i>3rd Phase</i>	<i>4th Phase</i>	<i>5th Phase</i>	<i>6th Phase</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Key Election info</i>
Date of Election	22 March 16	31 March 16	23 April 2016	7 May 2016	28 May 2016	4 June 2016		Average Vote casting : 76%
Total Number of Union	712	639	615	718	722	698	4104	
Last of Nomination Submit	22 Feb 2016	2 March 2016	27 Mar 2016	7 April 2016	2 May 2016	10 May 2016		
Scrutiny	23-24 Feb 2016	5-6 March 16	29-30 Mar 16	10-11 April 16	4-5 May 2016	11-12 May		220 chairmen's win without contested in 2016 UP election.
Withdrawal	2 March 2016	13 March 16	6 April 2016	18 April 2016	12 May 2016	19 May 2016		
Election Campaign Period	18 days	16 days	16 days	15 days	15 days	15 days	0	
Total voters	11,937,963	11,214,939	11,980,355	11,000,000	11,000,000	11,000,000	68,133,257	
Female Voters	5,942,694	5,630,232	5,966,217	5,434,000	5,434,000	5,434,000	33,841,143	
Male Voters	5,995,269	5,584,707	6,014,138	5,566,000	5,566,000	5,566,000	34,292,114	
Number of Polling Stations	7,087	6,204	5,600	7,062	7,000	7,000	39,953	
Number of Presiding Officers	7,087	6,204	5,600	7,062	7,000	7,000	39,953	
Number of Polling Officers	38,036	32,021	27900	37054	35000	35000	205011	
Law enforcing agency's	141,740	170,000	112,000	141,240	141,240	141,240	141,240	
Chairman Candidates	3,034	2,684	2,672	3245	3254	3232	18,121	
Member (General)	25,847	21,259	20,943	24,187	27,000	25,000	144,236	
Reserved Candidate	7,575	6,498	6,298	7,159	7,000	5,000	39,530	
Chairman (AL) Candidate	712	639	615	718	722	698	4104	
Chairman (BNP) Candidate	591	560	534	612	622	629	3,548	
Chairman (Independent)	1,246	1,144	1,185	1522	1527	1560	8,184	
Chairman (Other Party)	487	309	328	352	372	334	2,182	
Political Party	14	15	15	16	15	14	14	
Uncontested Chairman	54	34	29	35	39	28	220	
Uncontested Female Member	54	0	79	98	0	0	231	
Uncontested General seat	179	0	174	287	0	0	640	
Bangladesh Awami league	526	444	393	443	442	397	2645	
Bangladesh Nationalist Party	50	63	60	71	67	61	372	
Jatiyo Party (E)	2	3	10	4	8	13	40	
Others Party	8	2	1	8	9	35	63	
Independent	109	117	139	174	170	171	880	
Chairman (Female)	8	4	2	3	7	5	29 out 179	
General Seat (Female)								
Killed (Before and after)	10	11	17	10	23	18	89	
Killed in Election day	11	9	5	8	15	5	53	
Injured (before and after)	2660	1608	2882	1285	1836	1331	11,602	
Absent of BNP Candidates	121	79	81	106	100	69	556	
Percentage	74%	78%	77%	76%	77%	76%	76%	

231 General members win without contested in 2016 UP election.

In election day killed: 53 After and before killed-89

29 win female Chairman's in 2016 up election.

5% reserved seat candidate win without contested.

Uncontested: Chairman: 1988 (100) 1992 (4), 1997 (37), 2003 (34), 2011 (8-9)

References:

- Election Commission Bangladesh (ECB) information about Website
- Daily Newspaper regarding UP election news scanning
- Election Commission Bangladesh. Code of Conduct for Political Parties and Candidates, 2008 (amended in 2016; Bangla). Dhaka
- Code of Conduct of election campaign of Union Parishad Election-2016
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- Democracywatch Observation team