

25 small parties

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percent votes, three 0.01 percent, three 0.02 percent and three others 0.03 percent votes.
The parties that got less than 0.01 percent votes include Ganotantri Party (five candidates, 2565 votes), Biplabi Workers Party of Bangladesh (five candidates, 2021 votes), Bangladesh Muslim League (five candidates, 1436 votes), Islamic Front Bangladesh (three candidates, 1347 votes), Freedom Party (two candidates, 566 votes) and Bangladesh Samyabadi Dal (one candidate, 297 votes).
Among the small political parties, Islami Andolan Bangladesh fielded highest 166 candidates who bagged 7,33,969 votes or 1.05 percent of the total votes.
Progotishil Ganotantri Party led by Ferdous Ahmed and Bangladesh Kalyan Party led by Maj Gen (Retd) Mohammad Ibrahim drew public attention as the two parties were formed during the tenure of the present caretaker government.
But, both the parties performed poorly. Progotishil Ganotantri Party got only 14,224 votes or 0.02 percent of the total votes fielding candidates in 21 seats while Bangladesh Kalyan Party bagged 21,726 votes or 0.03 percent of the total votes fielding candidates in 39 seats.
Bikalpadhara Bangladesh (BDB) led by former president

Ramna blast

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OF the cases, submitted the charge sheet to the CMM's Court on November 29 last year.
The IO included names of Harkatul Jihad (Huji) chief Mufti Abdul Hannan and 13 others in the charge sheets of the cases for committing the offences.
Of the accused Harkatul Jihad (Huji) chief Mufti Abdul Hannan Munshi alias Abul Kalam, Arif Hasan Suman alias Abdur Razzak, Maulana Akbar Hossain alias Helaluddin, Shahadat Ullah alias Jewel, Maul na Abu Taher and Maulana Abdur Rauf were earlier arrested from different places and now in jail custody.
The other accused former deputy minister Abdul Salam Pintu's brother Maulana Mohammad Tajuddin, Maulana Abdur Hannan Sabir, Maulana Shaikat Osman alias Sheikh Farid, Hafez Jahangir Alam Badar, Maulana Abu Bakar alias Selim Hawlader, Mufti Shafiqur Rahman, Maulana Yahya and Mufti Abdul Hye have been on the run since the cases were filed against them.
The court had earlier issued arrest warrants against them and an order to attach their properties.
During the investigation of the cases, Hannan, Akbar and Suman gave confessional statements to magistrates at different times.

UN hails

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attested to by both domestic and international observers, said a UN press release.
The spokesperson underscored the need for cooperation among political parties including a constructive role from the part of the opposition in Parliament to ensure a peaceful transition to democracy.
Last month UN Secretary General Mr. Ban Ki-moon formed a high-level panel headed by his former personal representative for Afghanistan, Frances Vendrell, to assess and report on the conduct of the last stages of the electoral process and developments in the immediate post-election period.
The three-member team, which also includes Bhojraj Pokharel, Nepal's Chief Election Commissioner, and Aracely Santana, the former deputy director of the UN Electoral Assistance Division, is currently visiting Bangladesh for the second time.
The panel has held talks with the Election Commission, polls observers and political parties and will brief Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon upon its return early next month on the conduct of the polls and developments in the immediate post-election period.
Meanwhile, Russia welcomes the elections to the Jatiya Sangsad of Bangladesh as a result of which the Awami League headed by Sheikh Hasina pulled off a stunning landslide victory.
Russia wants to see friendly Bangladesh as a stable, democratic and successfully progressing country, according to a statement issued by the Embassy of the Russian Federation in Dhaka yesterday.

Thai nightclub

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during the stampede from the club, which had only one door for the public, police Maj Gen. Chokchai Deprasertwit said. Firefighters said a door at the rear was known only to the staff, while an Associated Press reporter saw a third door at one side of the building.
Video footage of the disaster showed bloodied, bruised and burned victims being dragged out of the burning, two-story club or managing to run through the door or shattered windows. The video provided to AP Television News by rescue workers showed flames racing through the entire building even as the rescue operation was going on.
"We are confident that the new Government of Bangladesh will pursue the good tradition of cooperation with Russia in the interests of the peoples of the two countries," the statement added.

Businesses

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They said Hasina's announcement to work with all has brought hopes and they expressed their readiness to lend all support to activities aimed at building the economy and the nation.
The business leaders thanked the AL chief for lending her support to the private sector development. They said the grand alliance has been voted to power in an election praised as free, fair and peaceful at home and abroad.
Signatories to the statement include President of Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI) Annisul Haque, former adviser to a caretaker government Syed Manzur Elahi, President of International Chamber of Commerce-Bangladesh (ICC) Mahbubur Rahman, President of Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MCCI) Abdul Hafiz Chowdhury, President of Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry (DCCI) Zafar Osman, President of Chittagong Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCCI) and MP-elect MA Latif, President of Bangladesh Garments Manufacturers and Exporters' Association (BGMEA) Anwarul Alam Chowdhury, President of Bangladesh Knitwear Manufacturers and Exporters' Association (BKMEA) Fazlul Haque, President of Bangladesh Textile Mills Association (BTMA) Abdul Hye Sarkar and President of Bangladesh Association of Banks Nazrul Islam Mazumder.
Amra Muktiyoddhar Santan, an organisation of the children of the freedom fighters, greeted Awami League President Sheikh Hasina at Sudha Sadan in the city yesterday. The Daily Star staff correspondent reports.
Bangladesh Awami Ulama League and Dhaka City Freedom Fighters' Rehabilitation Cooperative Society Ltd also congratulated the AL chief at her residence.
Bangladesh Mahila Parishad President Ayesha Khanam and General Secretary Maleka Banu in a statement congratulated Hasina, AL, grand alliance activists and the people of the country.
Association for Land Reform and Development, Dakkhin Banga Biplabi Ainjibi Samannaya Parishad Dhaka and Bangladesh Film Producers and Distributors Association also felicitated Hasina in separate statements.
Helaluddin 42, a pro-BNP teacher of Benga-Beroil College in Magura sadar upazila was critically injured when AL supporters attacked him at Batikandanga village of Magura municipality.
AL supporters also attacked and injured BNP organising secretary of Dhaneswargati union committee, Ashraful Islam Asha, at Singra bazaar in Shalikhia upazila.
Our Patuakhali correspondent has reported that five JCD men were injured when they locked in a clash with Jubo league activists in Galachipa.
AL cadres in Kuliarchar upazila injured at least 11 BNP activists in separate attacks over the last two days, a correspondent from Kishoreganj has reported.
Our Khulna correspondent says a local Jubo Dal worker was stabbed when AL activists

Primary schools

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crowd new textbooks for primary students and 1.80 crore textbooks for Ibtedayee students.
NCTB Chairman M Masir Uddin said secondary school textbooks will go on sale in three phases -- January 6, 15 and 26.
Primary and Mass Education Adviser Rasheda K Chowdhury said fresh textbooks for all primary school students is not possible this year for technical reasons.
She added that this year textbooks have better binding, printing, and are free from mistakes.
Rasheda called on the next government to focus on the regional pockets of deprived poor, especially in the haor, char land, hilly areas, slums and dalit groups.
Among others, Education Secretary M Momtajul Islam, Primary and Mass Education Secretary Badrul Alam Tarafdar, Directorate of Primary Education Director General Nazrul Islam Khan and top officials of the two ministries were present at the programme.

ACC's chief

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Anti-corruption Commission against Awami League President Sheikh Hasina, who is now going to assume the state power. It is now very embarrassing for me to stand against Hasina in the court," he said, adding that he did not feel security problems.
About the cases against Hasina, Mukul said, "If the government now wants my opinion to withdraw the cases against the AL chief, I will say that the cases cannot be withdrawn since the High Court has stayed those. Complexities will be created then. Considering the changed situation, I have resigned from the office of the ACC prosecutor showing personal grounds," he added.
He said there was no pressure on him to quit the job.
Asked what will be consequences of the cases against Hasina, Mukul, an noted criminal lawyer, said the ACC will now take decision on dealing with the cases.
"I made some comments about the cases against Hasina since I was the prosecutor of the Anti-corruption Commission. Now I should not make any comment on the consequences of the cases," he said.

Rigging claim

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footproof security arrangement.
The CEC expressed the hope the standard in which they have worked must be upheld in future if those things they have set permanently are nurtured and those things which prevailed in this election sustain in future.
He also congratulated political parties, polling staffs, members of law-enforcement agencies and the media for their contributions to holding such a credible election.
Asked whether EC has found the voters' eagerness in electing honest and competent candidates as per its campaign, the poll chief said when any big issue arises, popular votes go to symbols.
"People don't see individual candidates in a crucial moment of nation or when the nation tries to overcome a crisis," he said, reminding the 1954 election when people did not consider the candidate's competence except symbols.
Huda however said they tried their best to make aware the people so that they consider candidates' individual competence. He added they had in fact nothing to do except putting information before the people so that they could decide who they would choose.
The CEC said work has

Post-polls violence

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At least four people have been killed and over 150 injured in post election violence across the country so far.
Meanwhile, Inspector General of Police Nur Mohammad yesterday gave assurance that post-election law and order situation in the country would not aggravate any further and that the police were on alert.
At least 30 activists of BNP-led four-party were wounded in Pabna sadar, Surjanagar, Arghoria during the last 24 hours, UNB reports.
Locals said cadres of Awami League and its front organisations attacked the BNP-Jamat activists and vandalised their homes and businesses.
Alliance sources claim that more than 1,000 activists and local leaders went into hiding to escape the wrath of AL cadres.
Our Magura correspondent reported that at least 10 supporters of BNP and AL, including a college teacher, were injured in separate incidents in Magura sadar, Sreepur and Shalikhia upazilas.
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Grenade haul

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arrested JMB militants Abdul Hye alias Masud and Khorshed Alam along with the grenades at Teribazar in the port city.
A case was filed with Kotwali Police Station against five JMB militants, including Hye and Khorshed, under Explosive Substances Act. The three other accused remained absconding.
Rab sources said operation is going on to track down the fugitives.

Oath

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provision to save their membership in parliament.
The EC yesterday afternoon approved publishing of the election results in official gazettes. The EC Secretariat then sent them to the government press for printing.
The printing was completed last night and copies of the gazettes will be sent to the Parliament Secretariat this morning, sources in the EC Secretariat said.
Officials in the Parliament Secretariat have started preparing in this regard. Speaker Jamiruddin Sircar, constitutionally empowered to administer the oath taking, yesterday directed officials to complete the preparatory tasks.
The offices of the Parliament Secretariat will remain open today and tomorrow, despite being the weekend, to complete necessary preparations. "On receiving the gazettes of official results, we will start delivering invitation to MPs-elect for taking oath," an official of the secretariat said.
The new constitutional provision also empowers the chief election commissioner to conduct oath taking in absence of the speaker and the deputy speaker of parliament.
On completion of taking oath, Awami League, which got a landslide mandate Monday, will hold its parliamentary party meeting and elect its leader. Then it will forward a name to the president to appoint as the prime minister to form the new government.
The new parliament will go into session within 30 days of the publication of the poll results, as per the constitution.

UN assures

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Martin told reporters that he came to congratulate Sheikh Hasina on her poll victory.
"it's my privilege to congratulate Sheikh Hasina and the people of Bangladesh on this democratic occasion," he said.
But he declined to respond to any question regarding the election and claim of BNP about the election results. "We have sent our separate team to observe the election," he said.

3 MPs-elect

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election, sources said.
In a letter to the central bank governor, the commission asked for sending the probe report in seven days.
Sonali Bank also filed a case with the Money Loan Court against Maudul for defaulting loan of Tk 23.58 crore. The case is pending with the court, sources said.
The bank had also complained to the Returning Officer (RO) during scrutiny of nomination papers but the RO did not entertain the complaint, sources said.
As per the Representation of the People Order (RPO), an individual having defaulted loan is not eligible to contest the election. If he is proved guilty of concealing information about his defaulted loan, his membership of parliament might be cancelled, electoral law experts noted.
And Alamgir was not eligible to contest the poll since he was convicted under the emergency powers rules, which barred convicts from electoral roll.
During scrutiny, the RO had cancelled Alamgir's nomination paper, and he filed an appeal with the EC challenging the RO's decision.
The EC rejected Alamgir's appeal but the AL leader got back his candidacy on an interim court order.
Similarly, Shafiqul was ineligible to contest the poll as per an EC decision, which was upheld by the High Court.
In its decision, the EC said mayors of city corporations and municipalities are not eligible to contest parliamentary election unless they resign from the posts before filing nomination papers since the posts are deemed as office of profit.
But responding to an appeal by Dhaka City Corporation Mayor Sadek Hossain Khoka, the SC judge stayed the EC's decision for a few weeks. In such a situation, Shafiqul became eligible to contest the poll.
The EC however has decided to launch a legal battle against the SC's interim order when the matter comes for final disposal. It has already consulted legal experts in this regard, sources said.
Some others also got back their candidacies following the SC order but lost the poll battle.

President

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He was speaking at the inaugural ceremony of the 14th Dhaka International Trade Fair at Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Centre in the capital.
He congratulated the winning party and all the members of the parliament elected in the elections on December 29.
He also praised everybody concerned with the entire election process for a successful conduct of the vote.
Awami League-led grand alliance got a landslide victory in Monday's polls. However, on Wednesday, BNP said the election results were stage-managed and unacceptable.
Foreign election observers of different organisations, European Union Election Observation Mission (EUEOM), Commonwealth Observer Group, National Democratic Institute (NDI) and Asian Network for Free Elections (Anfre) Foundation, said they did not find any instance of "election manipulation" as alleged by BNP.

Graft cases

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percentage would have been more if all the candidates had provided accurate information about their properties.
"Such a big number of millionaire MPs may turn the parliament into a club of millionaires," he said.
Presenting the analysis, Dr Badul said bad image of the former BNP lawmakers is a major reason for the defeat of the party in this election. A total of 129 leaders of the party contested the polls from 137 seats but only 14 of them won, he added.
Of the 163 first-time MPs-elect, 132 are from the AL, 13 from the BNP, 14 from the JP, two from Jamaat-e-Islami and two others are independent. Only 42 former AL MPs contested in 43 constituencies this time, he noted.
About the landslide victory of the AL-led grand alliance, former caretaker government adviser Sultana Kamal said such victory gives the scope for an "all taken for granted" mentality, which must be checked. "The media and the civil society have to play a critical role in this regard," she said.
Another former adviser, ASM Shahjahan, said, "The new government must prove the proverb 'power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely' wrong."

Gaza bombed

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Gaza officials said more than 400 people have died and 1,600 have been wounded since Israel began its aerial campaign on Saturday. The UN says at least 60 Palestinian civilians have died.
In Israel, three civilians and a soldier have been killed by rocket fire that has reached deeper than ever into Israel.
Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert, who rebuffed a French proposal for a two-day cease fire, won't agree to a truce unless international monitors take responsibility for enforcing it, government officials said. He's made this point in talks with Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and other world leaders who are pressing for an end to the violence, they added.
The government officials spoke on condition of anonymity because the talks were confidential.
International intervention helped Israel to accept a truce that ended its 2006 war with Lebanese Hezbollah guerrillas, when the UN agreed to station peacekeepers to enforce the terms. This time, Israel isn't seeking a peacekeeping force, but a monitoring body that would judge compliance on both sides.
The idea was floated before the offensive but did not gain traction because of the complications created by the existence of rival Palestinian governments in the West Bank and Gaza, defence officials said.
Gaza has been under Hamas rule since the militant group overran it in June 2007; the West Bank has remained under the control of moderate Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, who has been negotiating peace with Israel for more than a year but has no influence over Hamas. Bringing in monitors would require cooperation between the fierce rivals.
An Abbas confidant said the Palestinian president supported the notion of international involvement. "We are asking for a cease-fire and an international presence to monitor Israel's commitment to it," aide Nabil Abu Rdenneh said.
Israeli Cabinet ministers have been unswayed by a flurry of diplomatic activity meant to bring about a truce, instead authorizing the military on Wednesday to push ahead with its campaign. Militant rocket fire into Israel persisted, though at a low level Thursday, with four rockets fired by late morning.
France had proposed a 48-hour ceasefire to allow humanitarian supplies into Gaza, but Olmert said the time was not ripe to consider it. A separate proposal by Turkey and Egypt, two of Israel's few allies in the Muslim world, also seemed to be attracting little serious study in Israel or Gaza.

Young MPs-elect

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Role of party leaders in the last seven years, especially after the 1/11 changeover, will also be taken into consideration for the sources added.
Talking to The Daily Star, AL Commerce and Industry Secretary Col (retd) Faruk Khan said, "I believe the party chief will pick more efficient persons who will be able to contribute to the fulfilment of the party's electoral manifesto and the Vision 2021."
Replying to a query, he said he does not know yet if he would be chosen as a cabinet minister.
Sources said senior Presidium members of the AL, including Syeda Sajeda Chowdhury, Amir Hossain Amu, Abdur Razzak, Tofail Ahmed, Suranjit Sengupta and Mohiuddin Khan Alamgir, might be kept out of the cabinet and made chairpersons of different standing committees.
Those whose names are being widely discussed among the party rank and file as the next cabinet members are Matia Chowdhury, Abul Maal Abdul Muhit, Obaidul Quader, Syed Ashraful Islam, Saber Hossain Chowdhury, Bir Bahadur, Asaduzzaman Noor, Nurul Islam Nahid, Col (retd) Faruk Khan, Dr Abdur Razzak, Dr Dipu Moni, Dr Hasan Mahmud, HN Ashiqur Rahman, Shahara Khatun, Jahangir Kabir Nanak, Mirza Azam, Prof AFM Ruhul Haque and Fazle Noor Taposh.
Hasina might also include JP acting Chairman barrister Anisul Islam Mahmud and presidium members Ziauddin Ahmed Bablu and GM Quader, Workers Party President Rashed Khan Menon and politbuo member Fazle Hossain Badsha, and Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal President Hasanul Haque Inu in her cabinet.
Names of Dr Farash Uddin Ahmed, Dr Moshiur Rahman and Muhit are being widely discussed for the next finance minister.
Party leaders are also discussing names of a few teachers of Dhaka University, including Prof AAMF Hossain Siddique, Prof AK Azad Chowdhury and Prof Abul Barakat, as possible members of the cabinet.
Sources said Hasina might appoint Zillur Rahman, the senior most Presidium member of her party, as the president of the country.
INDIAN HC MEETS HASINA
Indian High Commissioner Pinak Ranjan Chakravarty held a meeting with Sheikh Hasina at Sudha Sadan last night, reports UNB.
Dr Hasan Mahmud, a special assistant to Hasina, told reporters that the Indian envoy handed over her felicitation letters of Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, Congress President Sonia Gandhi and West Bengal Chief Minister Buddhadeb Bhattacharya.
He said the Indian envoy also discussed how New Delhi can contribute to economic development of Bangladesh.

Serial blasts

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Shillong to attend a weekend science conference, state government officials added.
In the past two decades, more than 10,000 people have lost their lives to insurgency in Assam state, which is known for its tea, timber and oil reserves.
The latest blasts occurred just over a month after an attack on India's financial hub Mumbai, which left 172 people dead, including nine gunmen.
In October last year 71 people were killed and scores hurt when a series of bombs exploded in towns and cities across Assam.
The Indian government blamed the Ufa but it denied involvement. A group calling itself the "Islamic Security Force-Indian Mujahideen" later claimed responsibility.
Other previous bombings in Assam have also been blamed on the Ufa, which is fighting the government for an independent homeland since 1979.
Public support for the Ufa has waned in recent years after a series of attacks that claimed civilian casualties.
A survey last year by a civil society group, the Assam Public Works, said more than 95 percent of people in the state rejected the Ufa's demand for independence.

people of Gaza are waiting to see the Zionist enemy in Gaza to tear them into pieces of flesh," said Mazini. Israel and Egypt blocked Gaza after Hamas seized control of the territory, and have opened their borders only to let in limited amounts of humanitarian aid.
Explosions shook Gaza City on Thursday as Israeli planes targeted three government buildings, including the parliament. Hospital officials said 25 wounded were evacuated from nearby houses. The military said aircraft also bombed smuggling tunnels along the Gaza-Egypt border, part of an ongoing attempt to cut off Hamas' last lifeline to the world outside the embattled Palestinian territory.
Aircraft also went after Hamas police and their vehicles.
One pre-dawn strike targeting the house of a Hamas operative in northern Gaza killed a 35-year-old woman and wounded eight people, a Gaza Health Ministry official said.
Israeli ground forces, meanwhile, were putting the final touches on preparations for a possible ground invasion, which would have to be ordered by Israel's Cabinet to go ahead. The thousands of troops who are to take part have been moved to the border, along with armoured vehicles and artillery pieces.
Israelis are not eager to see the operation expand beyond the air-based campaign, a poll Thursday showed.
The survey of 472 people showed that 52 percent want the air assault to continue, while only 19 percent wanted to see a ground offensive. Twenty percent favoured a ceasefire.
The Dialog company poll appeared Thursday in the daily Haaretz. It had a margin of error of 4.6 percentage points.
In five days of raids, Israeli warplanes have carried out some 500 sorties against Hamas targets, and helicopters have flown hundreds more combat missions, a senior Israeli military officer said on condition of anonymity in line with military regulations.