election.

FROM PAGE 1

percent votes, three 0.01 percent, three 0.02 percent and three others 0.03 percent

The parties that got less than 0.01 percent votes include Ganotantri Party (five candidates, 2565 votes), Biplobi 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 Bangladesher Samyabadi Dal (one candidate, 297 votes).

Among the small political better. parties, Islami Andolan Bangladesh fielded highest 166 candidates who bagged 7,33,969 votes or 1.05 percent of the total votes while Jagpa

Progotishil Ganotantrik Party led by Ferdous Ahmed and Bangladesh Kalyan Party led by Maj Gen (Retd) Mohammad Ibrahim drew parties were formed during the tenure of the present caretaker government.

But, both the parties performed poorly. Progotishil Ganotantrik 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

FROM PAGE 16

(IO) of the cases, submitted the charge sheet to the CMM's Court on November 29 last

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 Abdul Hannan Sabbir, Maulana Shawkat Osman alias Sheikh Farid, Hafez Jahangir Alam Badar, Maulana Abu Bakar alias Selim Hawlader, Mufti Shafiqur Rahman, Maulana Yahiya 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

FROM PAGE 16

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 democ-

Last month UN Secretary General Mr. Ban Ki-moon formed a high-level panel headed by his former personal representative for Afghanistan, Francesc 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 Bhojra Pokharel, Nepal's Chief Election Commissioner, and Aracelly Santana, the former deputy director of the UN Electoral Assistance Division, is currently visiting Bangladesh for the second

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 yester-

day. 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.

AQM Badruddoza Chowdhur and Gono Forum led by emi nent jurist Dr Kamal Hossain also performed poorly in the

BDB fielded candidates in 63 constituencies and got only 148154 votes which is 0.21 percent of the total votes.

Forty-five candidates of Gono Forum contested the election and bagged only 72,867 votes or 0.10 percent of the total votes.

However, two other small political parties Islami Oikya Jote (IOJ) and Jatiya Ganotantrik Party (Jagpa) which are components of the four-party alliance performed

The IOJ fielded candidates in four constituencies and got 1,08,415 votes or 0.16 percent contested two seats and bagged 1,07,796 votes or 0.15 percent of the total votes.

The other small parties include Jamiate Ulamaye Islam Bangladesh (six candipublic attention as the two dates and 1,73,633 votes or 0.25 percent), Zaker party (36 candidates, 1,29,289 votes or 0.19 percent), Krishak Sramik Janata League (46 candidates, 1,05,635 votes or 0.15 percent), Communist Party of Bangladesh (37 candidates, 42,167 votes or 0.06 percent), Bangladesh Samajtantrik Dal (57 candidates, 38,888 votes or 0.06 percent), Bangladesh Islami Front (17 candidates, 31,450 votes or 0.05 percent), Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (24 candidates, 29422 votes or 0.04 percent), Bangladesh Khelafat Majlish (nine candidates, 28546 votes or 0.04 percent), Bangladesh Tarikat Federation (31 candidates 19,750 votes or 0.03 percent), Bangladesh National Awami Party (13 candidate, 19639 votes or 0.03 percent), Bangladesh Khelafat Andolan (30 candidates, 13,759 votes or 0.02 percent), National People's Party (29 candidates, 13,699 votes or 0.02 percent) Bangladesh National Awami Party (six candidates, 8799 votes or 0.01 percent), Ganofront (14 Candidates, 3,990 votes or 0.01 percent) and Oikyabaddha Nagarik Andolan (11 candidates, 3,543 votes or 0.01 percent).

BNP wants AL

FROM PAGE 1 good. Yet we hope they will run the government having cooperation from all. We want them to form government, we will give them scope.

He also said they have no plan to go for any movement at this moment. Rather, they want to observe the coming government's activities.

People's rights were not established through the recent election. There might be some 'other power' behind this election, and they wanted to bring a particular party and alliance to

power, he added. Replying a question, Delwar said BNP is a people-oriented party and will always remain by

their side. They would now work to strengthen the party and bring discipline in it, he said.

Others present with him included party leaders Amanullah Aman, Fazlul Haq Milan, JCD President Azizul Bari Helal and Shafiul Bari Babu.

BNP alleges

shows that the voters got less than one minute each for

He also said percentage of votes cast could have been about 66.4 at best, and in no case 87 percent

The mastermind behind the vote rigging has failed to adjust the estimate of vote casting with vote rigging, the BNP leader commented.

Party leader Illias Ahmed, who contested the election from Sylhet, alleged that he found hundreds of ballot papers carrying 'sheaf of paddy' seal (BNP's poll symbol) abandoned near Dohal Primary School polling centre.

He showed reporters three such ballot papers at the press

Rizvi also alleged that AL men have resorted to repression on BNP men in different areas of country, including Tangail, Chittagong and Munshiganj.

Thai nightclub

FROM PAGE 16 during the stampede from the club, which had only one door for the public, police Maj. Gen. Chokchai Deeprasertwit 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

Businesses

FROM PAGE 1 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 econ-

omy 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 state-

ment 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 o Bangladesh Textile Mills Association (BTMA) Abdul Hye Sarkar and President of Bangladesh Association of Banks Nazrul Islam Mazumder.

Amra Muktijoddhar 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 state-

Primary schools

FROM PAGE 16 crore new textbooks for primary students and 1.80 crore textbooks for Ibtedayee stu-

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 Choudhury 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 FROM PAGE 16

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 conse quences of the cases against Hasina, Mukul, a 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

FROM PAGE 1 foolproof security arrange-

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.

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 compe-

nothing to do except putting information before the people so that they could decide who theywould choose.

tence. He added they had in fact

already started to enrol around eight to 10 thousand voters as they have ID cards, but their names were not on the roll.

He went on to say the average turnout was 86.29 percent and in some constituencies the number exceeded 90 percent. He termed it unimaginable but said if an environment is created and the people are given the opportunity, they cast their votes in large number.

"The enthusiasm we have seen in this election has never

Accompanied by Election Asked whether EC has found Commissioner Brig Gen (retd) M Sakhawat Hossain, the CEC reminded about their electoral roadmap announced in July last year stipulating that the stalled parliamentary polls must be held by 2008.

> our job as we pledged in the roadmap," he added.

upazila polls scheduled for January 22, the CEC said the upazila election will also be held as perschedule.

to hold polls to Dhaka City Corporation, municipalities and union parishads. "So it will be a year of ballots," he added.

roll, he said EC will begin the task in early February as it cannot do the task earlier due to The CEC said work has upazilaelections.

attacked him in city's Raipara

Inspector General of Police

Nur Mohammad, at a at a

post-election briefing over the

law and order situation said

yesterday, "I am confident that

the situation will not aggra-

vate any further and the new

government will not patronise

any criminals, terrors and

new government chooses to

patronise the criminals, they

will also suffer like in the past.

Mohammad said that after the

election no massive clashes or

violence has taken place so far.

However sporadic incidents

have taken place at different

that many of these incidents

had no political connections,

and added that during a

period when power is being

transferred form one govern-

ment to another, such type of

incidents are not uncommon.

police force has been directed

to work professionally and in

case of any failure to so do,

stern action would be taken

against the person concerned.

told the press that adequate

measures have been taken to

keep the law and order situa-

tion under control across the

Grenade haul

arrested JMB militants Abdul

Hye alias Masud and Khorshed

Alam along with the grenades

Kotwali Police Station against

five JMB militants, including

Hye and Khorshed, under

Explosive Substances Act. The

three other accused remained

is going on to track down the

provision to save their mem-

noon approved publishing of

the election results in official

gazettes. The EC Secretariat

then sent them to the govern-

pleted last night and copies of

the gazettes will be sent to the

Parliament Secretariat this

morning, sources in the EC

Secretariat have started pre-

paring in this regard. Speaker

Jamiruddin Sircar, constitu-

tionally empowered to admin-

ister the oath taking, yesterday

directed officials to complete

Parliament Secretariat will

remain open today and

tomorrow, despite being the

weekend, to complete neces-

sary preparations. "On receiv-

ing the gazettes of official

results, we will start delivering

invitation to MPs-elect for

taking oath," an official of the

provision also empowers the

chief election commissioner

to conduct oath taking in

absence of the speaker and the

deputy speaker of parliament.

oath, Awami League, which

got a landslide mandate

Monday, will hold its parlia-

mentary party meeting and

elect its leader. Then it will

forward a name to the presi-

dent to appoint as the prime

On completion of taking

The new constitutional

secretariat said.

The offices of the

the preparatory tasks.

Officials in the Parliament

The printing was com-

The EC yesterday after-

bership in parliament.

ment press for printing.

Secretariat said.

Rab sources said operation

A case was filed with

at Teribazar in the port city.

FROM PAGE 16

absconding.

FROM PAGE 1

fugitives.

IGP Nur Mohammad also

The IGP also said that the

He however pointed out

parts of the country, he said.

The IGP added that if the

Talking to reporters, Nur

militants as in the past."

IGP Briefing

Post-polls violence

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.

led four-party were wounded in Pabna sadar, Sujanagar, Atghoria during the last 24 hours, UNB reports. Locals said cadres of

At least 30 activists of BNP-

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 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 Shalikha upazilas. Helaluddin 42, a pro-BNP teacher of Benga-Beroil

College in Magura sadar upazila was critically injured when AL supporters attacked him at Batikadanga village of Magura municipality. AL supporters also

attacked and injured BNP organising secretary of Dhaneswargati union committee, Ashraful Islam Asha, at Singra bazaar in Shalikha upazila. Our Patuakhali correspon-

dent 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

No impact FROM PAGE 1

constituency if more than 50 percent 'no' votes are cast.

Atotal of 3,82,437 'no' votes was cast in Monday's election in 299 constituencies. Of it, only Rangamati district constituency saw a staggering 32,067 'no' votes cast, which is the highest of all other legisla-

tive areas. In 20 constituencies of Dhaka a total of 78,822 'no' votes was cast while in the rural and remote areas the number of such votes was very meager compared to that of urban areas, particularly in the metropolitan cities.

However, before the election the EC had launched countrywide campaign urging voters to go for 'no' vote if they do not find any of the contesting candidates suitable in their constituencies.

The new provision was introduced in a bid to put pressure on political parties so that they would nominate competent and honest candidates to avert the 'no' vote disaster.

UN assures

FROM PAGE 1 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 minister to form the new to any question regarding the government. election and claim of BNP The new parliament will go about the election results. "We into session within 30 days of have sent our separate team to the publication of the poll observe the election," he said. results, as per the constitution.

been seen in the past."

plaint, 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 "We have been able to fulfil might be cancelled, electoral

law experts noted. And Alamgir was not eligi-On the much-talked-about ble to contest the poll since he

was convicted under the emergency powers rules, which barred convicts from He also said EC would move electoral race. During scrutiny, the RO

nation paper, and he filed an appeal with the EC challeng-On updating the electoral ing the RO's decision. The EC rejected Alamgir's appeal but the AL leader got

> interim court order. Similarly, Shafiqul was ineligible to contest the poll as per an EC decision, which was upheld by the High Court.

back his candidacy on an

had cancelled Alamgir's nomi

3 MPs-elect

In a letter to the central

Sonali Bank also filed a case

bank governor, the commis-

sion asked for sending the

with the Money Loan Court

is pending with the court,

The bank had also com-

plained to the Returning

Officer (RO) during scrutiny of

nomination papers but the RO

did not entertain the com-

probe report in seven days.

election, sources said.

FROM PAGE 1

sources said.

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 chamber judge stayed the EC's decision for a few weeks. In such a situation, Shafiqul became eligible to contest the

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

Some others also got back their candidacies following the SC order but lost the poll battle.

President

FROM PAGE 1

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 stagemanaged 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 (Anfrel) Foundation, said they did not find any instance of "election manipulation" as alleged by BNP.

Graft cases

FROM PAGE 16 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 million-

aires," he said.

Presenting the analysis, Dr Badiul 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 MPselect, 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

FROM PAGE 1

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.

against Maidul for defaulting In Israel, three civilians and a loan of Tk 23.58 crore. The case soldier have been killed by rocket fire that has reached deeperthan 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 confi-

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 Rdeneh 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 48hour 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. The UN Security Council, meeting for emergency consultations Wednesday night, discussed but did not vote on an Arab request for a legally binding resolution that would condemn Israel and halt its attacks.

A draft resolution was labelled "unbalanced" by the United States because it made no mention of halting Hamas rocket fire at Israeli towns the immediate cause behind Israel's massive air offensive.

Echoing Israel's cool response to truce proposals, a senior Hamas leader with ties to its military wing said now was not the right time to call off the fight. Hamas was unhappy with the six-month truce that collapsed just before the fighting began because it didn't result in an easing of Israel's crippling blockade on Gaza.

The Hamas leader, Osama Mazini, said in a statement distributed by the Hamas press office that his fighters were eager for a ground assault. "The

Serial blasts

FROM PAGE 16

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 The latest blasts occurred just over a month after an

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 Ulfa but it denied involvement. A group calling itself the "Islamic Security Force-Indian Mujahideen' later claimed responsibility.

Assam have also been blamed on the Ulfa, which is fighting the government for an independent homeland since 1979. Public support for the Ulfa

has waned in recent years after a series of attacks that claimed civilian casualties. A survey last year by a civil

demand for independence.

society group, the Assam Public Works, said more than 95 percent of people in the state rejected the Ulfa's

people of Gaza are waiting to see the Zionist enemy in Gaza to tear them into pieces of flesh," said Mazini. Israel and Egypt blockaded 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 vehi-

One pre-dawn strike targeting the house of a Hamas operative in northern Gazakilled a 35year-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 percentfavoured 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.

Young MPs-elect

FROM PAGE 1 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

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 Muhith, 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 politburo member Fazle Hossain Badsha, and Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal President Hasanul Haque Inu in

Ahmed, Dr Moshiur Rahman and Muhith are being widely discussed for the next finance minister. Party leaders are also discussing names of a few teachers of Dhaka University, including

Names of Dr Farash Uddin

her cabinet.

Prof AAMS Arefin Siddique, Prof AK Azad Chowdhury and Prof attack on India's financial hub 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

INDIAN HCMEETS HASINA

Indian High Commissioner Pinak Ranjan Chakravarty held a meeting with Sheikh Hasina at Sudha Sadan last night, reports UNB. Other previous bombings in Dr Hasan Mahmud, a

the country.

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.

of the total votes.