NEWS

UNSC membership

FROM PAGE 1 its support for Japan's perma-

nent membership in the Security Council. Japan welcomed Bangladesh's sup-

On July 25, 2006 Khaleda reiterated Bangladesh's support for Japan's permanent membership in the UNSC when the then Japan's foreign minister Taro Aso called on her in Dhaka. But a number of BNP lead-

ers including Khandaker Delwar Hossain, Lt Gen (retd) Mahbubur Rahman and Reaz Rahman criticised Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina saying it was not wise to extend such support so early because it may affect relations with other countries.

The joint communiqué issued on January 12, 2010 during Hasina's visit to India said: "The prime minister of Bangladesh conveyed her country's support in principle for India's candidature for the permanent membership of the United Nations Security Council when the reform of the UN Security Council is achieved.'

It further said Bangladesh conveyed its support to the ndian candidature for a nonpermanent seat in UNSC for the term 2011-2012. India also conveyed its support to Bangladesh's candidature for a non-permanent seat in UNSC for the term 2016-2017. However, the then presi-

dent Shahabuddin Ahmed on August 20, 2000 told the then Japanese prime minister Yoshiro Mori his country will continue to support Japan's bid to become a permanent member of UNSC. "We believe Japan has the

right to become a permanent

Khaleda

FROM PAGE 1 prime minister's press confer-

ence on the outcomes of the India visit held yesterday as the BNP chairperson will clarify the issue.

member, not because it is providing economic aid to developing countries, but because of what it has achieved since the World War II," the president added when the Japanese PM paid a courtesy call on him.

At that time, Hasina during her summit meeting with the visiting Japanese prime minister agreed about increasing number of both permanent and temporary seats of UNSC, but refrained from making any commitment to Japan's candidature.

Similarly, Khaleda during her visit to India did not make any commitment to India's candidature.

Proshika staff

FROM PAGE 16 Police drove out the intruders

at the midnight of Tuesday and took control of the office. Around 1,000 Proshika employees, including 450 staff from the head office and the

rest from several Area Development Centres (ADC), have been waiting around-theclock outside Proshika Bhaban to enter their office. The standoff is causing huge financial and other losses

to the non-governmental organisation, said Proshika Chief Executive Officer Mahbubul Karim talking to the Daily Star. Denial of the employees

access to their office by police is a contravention of a High Court (HC) order for a status quo. On Tuesday, Mirpur Police

Station also refused to take any case in connection with the midnight trespassing, said Karim. Following a revision peti-

tion filed by Qazi Faruque, the HC in its order in August last year said he could enter Proshika Bhaban alone to meet the present chairman and chief executive officer without holding any rally or procession.

Proshika has 6000 employees and 620 Upazila-based ADCs and sub ADCs across the

the quake had a population of

134,000, "According to the local

police, between 5,000 to 10,000

people have been killed and

most bodies are still in the

collapsed buildings," Byrs said.

being hindered by three major

constraints -- transport, com-

very limited and hampered by

the fact that the fuel stocks are

running low," said Byrs. "An-

other constraint is the lack of

munications and fuel.

ambulances."

Rescue efforts are however

"Transport resources are

UN seeks

This is a historic disaster. We have never been confronted with such a disaster in the UN memory. It is like no other," Elisabeth Byrs, spokeswoman

Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, told AFP in Geneva. In the town of Leogane, west of the capital, 80-90 percent of buildings were damaged or

of the UN Office for the

destroyed, and "No local government infrastructure remains," she said. A vanguard of the 10,000 US

nuclear-powered aircraft

"We have lift, we have com-

munications, we have some

command and control, but we

don't have much relief supplies

to offer," said Rear Admiral Ted

Hillary said she will travel to

Haiti to see the earthquake

relief efforts first hand, deliver

more supplies and meet

Haitian President Rene Preval.

very directly and personally to

the Haitian people our long-

term, unwavering support,

solidarity and sympathies to

reinforce President Obama's

message that they are not

facing this crisis alone," said

operating out of a police sta-

tion at the airport, where

Preval, looking exhausted with

dark pockets under his eyes,

said "the government has lost

its capacity to function prop-

Preval praised the massive

international relief effort but

warned that the aid operation

countries including the United

States, France and Venezuela,

had arrived at Port-au-Prince's

overwhelmed airport in a

Friday, a swarm of small boats

surrounded the first supply

ship to arrive as it approached a

crumbled pier with supplies

from Jeremie, a Haitian town

about 200km from Port-au-

residents with necessary food

while coal will help boil water

In Leogane, which before everyday.

to avoid spread of disease.

Bananas will provide local

At the city's harbour late

He said 74 planes from

remains uncoordinated.

single day.

Prince.

In an interview with AFP,

erly, but it has not collapsed."

The Haitian government is

"We will also be conveying

Branch aboard the carrier.

aid drops.

troops being deployed to Haiti With food in such short has taken control of the airport, supply, vendors were selling clogged with tons of relief plates of pasta for 100 gourds supplies, and has begun the (2.5 dollars), 10 times more first distribution of aid to quell than before the quake. the threat of violence.

The Haitian president Aid is also being distributed called on his countrymen to from the USS Carl Vinson, a show patience and defended the government against accucarrier where 19 helicopters sations of inaction. have been carrying out limited

"No one is alone in his situation. I understand that people suffer because they have relatives under the rubble, but they must understand that there are thousands of people in that very same situa-

tion," said Preval. Earlier the world body appealed for 562 million dollars from donors. The UN mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) was hit hard by the quake, with 37 of its 12,000 employees confirmed dead and some 330 still unaccounted for.

The United Nations is considering redeploying some 5,000 peacekeepers, soldiers and police officers from across Haiti to the capital Port-au-Prince, a UN official in Mexico said Friday.

The United Nations is thinking about ordering "5,000 personnel who are not in Portau-Prince" to move to the capital "and reinforce their colleagues," said United Nations system coordinator Magdy Martinez during a press conference in Mexico City.

Law minister

FROM PAGE 16

The minister said the government is planning to enact a law for disposing of both civil and criminal cases through Alternative Dispute

Resolution (ADR) system.

He said if the system is launched, the cases will be disposed of outside the courts through compromises, and the judges and lawyers can

play their role as mediators The government has already instructed the law commission to make necessary recommendations to the

Haitian officials said at least government for enacting the 50,000 people had been killed law, said the minister. and 1.5 million left homeless in He also said there are the Caribbean nation, one of around 10 lakh cases pending the poorest countries in the with the lower courts across world, which has long witnessed violence and bloodthe country and the backlog of

the cases is going higher

War crime

FROM PAGE 16 in any kind of war crimes under

the International Crimes (Tri-FROM PAGE 1 bunal) Act, 1973, which was amended last year.

No one would be spared, he The government wants to

ensure that the trial conforms to international standards and that is why the trial is being delayed, the law minister added. The government is working

towards the trial, and an amount of Tk 10 crore has already been allocated for the trial and the tribunal building has also been selected, he noted.

"The lawyers and judges in the country are not experienced in trying war crimes, so we might seek international cooperation in this regard," he said.

Dhaka University Vice Chancellor Prof AAMS Arefin Siddique, former DU VC AK Azad Chowdhury, Pro VC Prof Harun-or-Rashid, Prof Mizanur Rahman of law department, among others, attended the meeting. Mizanur Rahman presented

the keynote paper. The killing of former presi-

dent Ziaur Rahamn took place, as there was no immediate initiative to bring the criminals responsible for the assassination of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman to trial after the incident, the minister observed.

BAACP president Biplob Hasan Palash presided over the seminar.

Connectivity

FROM PAGE 1

roundtable on Bangladesh-India summit arranged by The Daily Star at its conference

Prof Rahman said an improvement in connectivity could help them get developed.

The CPD boss said India's seven northeastern states have remained underdeveloped for years because they are not well connected even with the mainstream Indian economy.

He also dispelled the notion that northeastern states of India, if their current status is considered, are big markets for Bangladesh. "But an increase in their purchasing power will benefit us," he

Bangladesh's export to India was nearly \$276 million in fiscal year 2008-09. O which, export to seven north eastern states would be no more than \$15 million.

On another notion that Bangladesh has become a market for Indian goods Prof Mustafizur Rahman said businessmen import goods from the country for cost benefit.

He said, "Transaction costs of imports also increase because of lack of connectiv

Prof Rahman also asked the government to make clear how it will spend \$1 billion received as loan from India. He also stressed the need to do more homework by our bureaucrats.

Himalayas

However they said that in the past, cooperation has been more prevalent than conflict.

Major Genera Muniruzzaman, president o the BIPSS, chaired the inaugural session which was attended by Mr Sompal, former Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources of India, Dr Xiaohong Chen, Director of the Department of Water Resources and Environment, Dipak Gyawali, former Minister for Water Resources, Ajay Dixit Director of Nepal Water

ICD leaders

Conservation Foundation.

FROM PAGE 1

are not students and older leaders have been included in the committee instead of real leaders, they added.

Obaidul Haque Nasir, senior joint convener of JCD DU unit and an leader of Tuku group, said their followers did not enter the campus to avoid clash as per the direction giver by the top central leaders.

A tense situation was prevailing on the campus through out the day following rebel faction's presence. Members of the committee

and their followers have remained out of the campus amid protest from the rebel group since announcement of the 171-member JCD central committee on January 1 with Sultan Salauddin Tuku as president and Amirul Islam Alim as general secretary.

The very next day of announcing the committee, some rebel leaders had beat up its three leaders who belong to Tuku group and also chased them out of the campus.

Indo-Bangla

Asian context. It was not just a bilateral visit as the main focus of the trip was connectivity. Regarding Reaz's claim

about the "quantum leap", she said they were in the dark before as there has been no investment in the power sector during the last seven years.

On supporting India for getting permanent membership in the United Nations Security Council, Dipu Moni said the BNP-led government had done the same with Japan on July 14, 2005. She said the issues of water

sharing of the Teesta, Tipaimukh dam project and maritime boundary did not come up suddenly. "After 1975, BNP was in power for 16 years but the issues were never raised," she claimed.

Dipu Moni urged her political opponents not to oppose for the sake of opposing. She said Bangladesh wants to move forward. Former diplomat Farook

Sobhan said if Bangladesh wants to accelerate its growth between eight and nine percent and achieve the status of a middle-income country, there is no other way but to build regional and subregional economic cooperation. "The key to Bangladesh's growth and development is connectivity," he said.

Greater cooperation with India, Bhutan and Nepal would open up the opportunities, he said, adding that India has made a major concession in giving Bhutan and Nepal transit to Bangladesh.

He said the visit would also give a huge push for Indian investment in Bangladesh. Irene Khan, secretary

general of Amnesty International, termed the prime minister's India visit 'courageous". "India is an economic power and we need to follow the tail end," she said. She,

moreover, expressed sadness for hearing little about the opportunities that might be created by the visit. Annisul Huq, president of the Federation of Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI), expressed unhappiness over the lack of

cooperation among South Asian countries despite its huge population. Under South Asian Free Trade Area (Safta), most of the products of Bangladesh, including apparels, get dutyfree access but it is the non-

tariff barriers (NTBs) that are

creating obstacles, he said. He said, "It [NTB] looks small but the implications are much bigger." Citing an example he said Indian trucks can enter Bangladesh territory but Bangladeshi trucks cannot enter Indian territory. He said NTBs such as testing certificates and labelling also hinder

the country's exports to India. The president of the apex trade body also suggested that a committee be formed to address and resolve NTB

Anisuddowla, president of Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MCCI), blamed the policymakers for not analysing the full outcome of the

agreements. India has been allowed to use Bangladesh's seaports, he said, adding, "We have nothing in our hand to negotiate

the next time." Former adviser to a caretaker government CM Shafi Sami said a new horizon has opened through the visit.

Prof Shahiduzzaman of Dhaka University said the prime minister's India visit has shifted the paradigm of Indo-Bangla relations, which has significant impacts on Bangladesh.

The visit proves that Bangladesh's foreign policy has become dynamic, he said, adding that the opposition of the parliament should consider the geopolitical position of the country.

Referring to killing of Bangladeshis in the borders, former ambassador Ashfaque Ahmed said the issue has been a serious matter of concern but had been almost ignored during the visit. Harun-ur Rashid, former

ambassador to UN, said there is hope that confusion over Bangladesh's relation with India has been removed with the PM's visit. On trade gap between

Bangladesh and India, he said trade deficit between China and Japan is much higher than that of these two countries, but the issue had not been discussed. "Opening up Mongla and Chittagong ports for India, Bhutan and Nepal in no way can be a security threat.'

Regarding supporting India for its candidature to the UN Security Council, he said a country is selected regionally baby on Friday.

is already a member of the council, it may not like Bangladesh's support to India. Former ambassador Jamil Majid said having good relations with India did not mean

for such candidature. As china

that there would not be any problems in future. Therefore, the Indo-Bangla summit needed serious follow-ups if good results are to be achieved.

"Success of the visit will actually depend on followups," he said.

Communist Party General Secretary Mujahidul Islam Selim said the prime minister's visit to India was very important and it should be considered as a step forward. "Mere joint communiqué

would not bring any result for

the country if we cannot seal agreements with India," Selim said, calling upon all not to make any sweeping comment on the outcome of the visit. Anisul Islam Mahmud presidium member of Jatiya Party, congratulated Prime

tion with India. He criticised the governments assumed power after the killing of Bangabandhu for their anti-India politics and misleading the people.

Minister Sheikh Hasina for her

"bold step" to improve rela-

He also censured Reaz Rahman for his comment on the government's handing Ulfa leader Arabinda Rajkhowa over to India, which would be a threat to the security of Bangladesh. He also ruled out another

allegation of the government making Bangladesh a market for India, saying, "It was BNP who made Bangladesh an open market for India during its regime in 1991-1996. BNP standing committee

member and former army chief Lt Gen (retd) Mahbubur Rahman said the visit was more beneficial to India. Problems relating to Indian

insurgents would intensify through allowing India to use Mongla and Chittagong seaports, he said criticising the government for not holding discussions with the opposition party before the PM's India visit. National Press Club

said the PM's visit to India has certainly created a new era and would help build up confidence in India Bangladesh relationships. He also accused the government for not informing the people about the agreements that would allow India to use

President Shawkat Mahmud

Bangladesh's seaports and railway connectivity with Ashuganj prior to the visit. He also said the prime minister could not have public opinion on these issues before the visit and feared that severe political disagreement might

arise in the country. Prothom Alo Editor Matiur Rahman also said the prime minister or the foreign minister could have discussed about the visit with Khaleda Zia as part of their bid for a national consensus on the

He blamed the government for giving confusing information about the visit. "We knew about signing of three agreements. But we did not have a clear idea about the use of ports by India, Bhutan and

Nepal," he added. Abdul Matlub Ahmed president of Bangladesh-India Chamber of Commerce and Industry hoped that the India visit of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina would boost trade and

investment in the country. Executive Director of Centre for Policy Dialogue Prof Mustafizur Rahman journalist Jaglul Ahmed Chowdhury, Director General of Bangladesh Institute for International and Strategic Studies Maj Gen Sk Munirul Islam, AL lawmaker Mostafa Faruk Mohammad and former ambassador Afsarul Qader were present at the discussion.

The Daily Star Editor and Publisher Mahfuz Anam moderated the roundtable.

being deprived of life-saving treatment because the upazila health complexes do not have oxygen treatment supplies. Dr Kajal Kanti Barua, civil

surgeon at Cox's Bazar, said there is also a severe lack of doctors in Ukhia and Kutubdia upazila health complexes. Sources concerned said that seven-month old Sohel, the son of salt farmer Syed

Alam of Akbar Boli village in

Uttar Dhurong union under Kutubdia upazial died at 7.30 am yesterday on the way to hospital. Fisherman Abdul Krim of Lemshikhali village lost his 11month-old baby Monir and Monzur Alam, from the same upazila, lost his18-month-old

Ashuganj FROM PAGE 16

last deadline.

On June 1 in 2009, construction work of the plant of Pel began. Fifteen powergenerating units with a capacity of four MW each will produce a total of 60 MW of power. The company invested around Tk 200 crore for this plant that has been constructed on a one acre site owned by the Ashuganj Power Station Company Limited (APSCL). MWM Germany, a manufac-

section while Energypac Engineering Ltd, a local company, has undertaken the work of all substations. Engineer Md Ruhul Amin, plant manager of PEL, said it can fulfil the electricity demand of two districts like

turer company, has done the

work of power generation

Brahmanbaria and Habiganj. He said they need three acres of land for setting up the plant. They have will have to use rented building from APSCL as they got only one acre of leased land, he added.

He said it takes maximum one year for the engineers to set up a 50 MW power plant. So the present power crisis may be resolved by establishing such plants in different parts of the country, the plant manager added.

However before bagging the deal, the company agreed to the PDB term that it would be able to build the plant within three months of signing the contract.

Pakistani FROM PAGE 16

criticising the US for its discriminatory attitude, said that Islamabad would never com-

promise on the country's

"We will not compromise on our country's honour and self-respect merely for the sake of aid. We have been constantly telling them (the US) we want trade ... not aid, Gilani had said.

Land grabbers **FROM PAGE 1**

by Dhaka Nagorik at the

sovereignty.

National Press Club. Without making any direct reference to any newspapers Mannan said, "Those newspa-

pers label each other as land

grabbers and a newspaper

owner put up posters on the walls in the capital demanding death sentence to the owner of another newspaper." Stating that corruption has become pervasive everywhere -- from the secretariat to the court veranda -- Abdul

Mannan Khan said genuine

land documents are replaced

by fake ones even in the ministry's files. About the unapproved projects of the real estate companies the state minister said, "How can you walk into a trap laid by the land grabbers? Let our hatred grow against those eye-catching advertisements. I alone will not be able

to do anything." He called upon all to stand in unison to build up resistance with the assistance of locals against the land grabbers wherever they would go to grab the lands.

The seminar was presided over by Abdul Matin, president of Dhaka Nagorik. Lawmaker Mostafa Jalal Mohiuddin and architect Iqbal Habib, also the joint secretary of Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon, among others, spoke at the seminar.

First Test

FROM PAGE 1 will beam live coverage of the match from 9.30am.

Recent performances showed that Bangladesh's batting has found their feet, but the tough task awaits the inexperienced Bangladesh bowling attack against a vaunted batting line-up that includes the likes of master batsman Sachin Tendulkar, batting wall Rahul Dravid, stylish VVS Laxman, dashing Virender Sehwag, inform Gautam Gambhir and dangerman Yuvraj Singh.

However India will be without their captain MS Dhoni who is out with a back strain. Sehwag will lead the team in his There is a good chance for

Bangladesh go in with three pacers and in that case young Shafiul Islam may make his Test debut. But left-arm spinner Enamul Haque will have to make way for him. The Bangladesh team management has not declared the

playing eleven yesterday but it was learnt that ICL-returnee Shahriar Nafees might return to the playing eleven for the match after two years. It's all but confirmed that left-handed batsman Zunaed Siddiqui and pacer Mahbubul Alam will be left out. On the other hand there

would be only one selection issue for the tourists as whether ports will be made operational they will go for two spinners or one. And as they are already one batsman short in the absence of Dhoni, they will definitely be looking for a bowling allrounder.

PM bins criticism

FROM PAGE 1

Bhutan.

and Mongla ports. the ruling Awami League, observed the tour has ushered in a new era in Indo-Bangla ties. The understanding reached would help enhance connectivity not only between the two countries but also in the entire region including Nepal and

The use of Chittagong and Mongla ports by neighbouring countries would strengthen economy and reduce trade gap. It would lead to modernisation of the ports, turning them into regional commercial hubs, she noted. Rail and road sectors too

would see much-needed development. Besides, the rivers would be dredged to make waterways more operational. Referring to criticism and

anti-Indian statements, the prime minister said bickering with a giant like India would never do any good. Friendly relations with them are crucial to overall development of the nation. Urging the opposition to

place national interests above party gains, she said, "Come to parliament and speak on every She alleged that the BNP-

Jamaat alliance is propagating falsehood over her India visit to confuse people. "Let's keep our motherland above party interests and unite

in endeavour to bring about essential changes," she said in her written speech. About the opposition allega tions that she has failed to protect national interests, the prime minister said, "They have

become habituated to spreading

falsehood and propaganda." Hasina reiterated that she would never do anything that might go against national inter-

She said it was her party that ensured fair share of the Ganges waters by striking a treaty during its previous tenure. "During my visit, I

demanded fair share of water of all 54 common rivers. I never shy away from speaking for my country and people. But when she [Khaleda Zia] visited India during her rule, she forgot to talk about our rightful share of river water," she said. About a question on India's planned Tipaimukh dam, she

nothing that would be harmful to Bangladesh and its people. "The last BNP-Jamaat government approved the Flood Action Plan in which Tipaimukh affairs were included. Why didn't they protest during their

Queried why Bangladesh could not conclude the muchexpected Teesta water-sharing treaty, she said the BNP-Jamaat alliance did nothing during their tenure to advance the process of Teesta treaty.

tenure?" Hasina asked.

"I'm however hopeful we will be able to ink a deal," she

She said, "Most of the people in South Asia are poor. Poverty is our common enemy and we want to fight the menace in unison. And to do so, we must strengthen the relations

There have been agreements

at ministerial and official levels

to work out solutions to different longstanding issues between Dhaka and New Delhi, said the prime minister. Citing three agreements and two memorandums of understanding signed between Bangladesh and India, she said

kinds of terrorism and extrem The border issues would be settled in light of the 1974's Indira-Mujib land boundary agreement.

other in the fight against all

between the border forces of the two countries would be strengthened to fight smug-The prime minister hoped that the border guards would

always resort to dialogue to

resolve whatever problem there

Besides, cooperation

She said power supply to Dahagram-Angarpota through Teen Bigha corridor has already begun. India will soon start constructing a flyover on Teen Bigha corridor to ensure people on either side can move without any hindrance.

Hasina said a decision has been taken to remove all kinds of tariff and non-tariff obstacles to expand trade between the two countries. This will mean tax-free entrance to Indian market for more Bangladeshi products. India would give \$1 billion in

loan for developing railway infrastructure, purchasing rai engines and carriages, upgrading Syedpur rail workshop and dredging rivers. Ramgarh-Subrum and Demagiri-Thegamukh land

and measurers will be taken to commission more land ports. The prime minister said the country would benefit financially by allowing India, Bhutan and Nepal to use its Chittagong

Border bazaars will resume at Meghalaya-Bangladesh border so that people of those areas could market their prod-

Besides, India has agreed to give Nepal and Bhutan transit for transportation of goods to

and from Bangladesh. Discussions will continue to fix maritime boundary with India in line with the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.

Ashuganj of Bangladesh and Shilghat of India will be designated port of call. Rail connections between Akhaura and Agartala will be established with technical assistance from the neighbouring country, she continued.

would co-operate with each other in dealing with power shortages. Work has started to have 250 megawatts of electricity from Indian national grid. At the start of the press con-

ference, the prime minister

She said the two countries

outlined her government's achievements during its first year in office. She said the world perceives Bangladesh in a more positive light now because of the socio-

economic and political

programmes taken up by the

"I believe ours will emerge as the most peaceful nation in South Asia in the coming days, observed the premier. Mentioning a recent amendment that revoked a provision

government in last one year.

against journalists in defamation cases, Hasina called upon the media not to run false or fabricated news. About the soaring prices of essentials, she said the price hike is illogical since the government has enough food in stock She said the administration

would investigate why the

for issuing arrest warrants

prices are shooting up despite government measures. Editors of different newspapers, high officials of private TV

the press conference. flanked by senior leaders of her

its allies on the left. Those present included AL said Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh has assured that his country would do

President Hasanul Haque Inu.

be rejected in a secret ballot. The US and other countries contributing troops and aid have pushed Karzai to get his second-term administration in place ahead of a Jan. 28 international conference on Afghanistan to be held in London. The mixed results will further delay the process, two weeks after parliament rejected

70 percent of his first Cabinet It's a major blow to the president's effort to assemble a team

reforms in his country, in its ninth year of war. Members of Afghanistan's Wolesi Jirga, the lower house, many wearing turbans and traditional salwar kameez, spent the week grilling the new

winter break to consider the list. Those approved included ministers of justice, foreign affairs, religious affairs, economy, rural development, social

industries were approved in the first round of voting. Karzai now needs to introduce 11 new faces for approval

degree of absenteeism during the questioning of the nominees, and I expect a large num-

among lawmakers or consultation before they vote. Parliament's initial rejection of 17 names was seen as a huge

commitment to clean and competent government in return for ongoing Western support to rebuild the country and fight Taliban insurgents. Karzai's office issued a

he "regretted" that such a large proportion of his nominees had been rejected but that he "respected" the constitutional decision of the parliament.

channels, news agencies, and senior journalists from electronic and print media attended The prime minister was party on the right and leaders of

veterans Syeda Sajeda Chowdhury, Amir Hossain Amu, Abdur Razzak, Tofail Ahmed, Abdul Jalil, Suranjit Sengupta, Obaidul Quader, AL General Secretary Syed Ashraful Islam, Jatiya Party Chairman HM Ershad, Workers Party President Rashed Khan Menon Samyabadi Dal President Dilip Barua, Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal

Afghan MPs

Parliamentarians, diplomats and analysts had earlier said they expected up to one third of his second round of choices to

that can focus on badly needed

both have resolved to help each nominees after being ordered by the president to cancel their

> affairs and counter narcotics. Ministers for defence, agriculture, interior, finance, education, culture, and mines and

to complete his cabinet but cannot nominate anyone who has already been rejected. "There has been a high

ber of them, perhaps one-third will be rejected," Haroun Mir, director of Afghanistan's Centre for Research and Policy Studies, said before the voting started. A lack of political parties means there is little cohesion

blow to Karzai, who is under enormous pressure to prove his

statement quoting him saying