AL surprised

In its evaluation of the polls outcome so far, the party acknowledges its performance had been much below expectations.

Hanif, also special assistant to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, said they are working hard to put in a better show on Monday and Tuesday.

He added that the organisation will expel those working against the party-endorsed candidates. Contacted, AL presidium

member Obaidul Quader said they would do an analysis of the polls in the municipalities where their candidates have been beaten comprehensively.

More than one candidate and intervention of some party leaders led to the debacle in some municipalities, he observed.

Meanwhile, the main opposition is trying to keep up the good performance in the remaining three divi-

It will take action against after being hit by a Shahi its rebel candidates, BNP standing committee member Nazrul Islam Khan told The Daily Star yesterday.

Referring to the ALbacked candidates' performance in Rajshahi and Rangpur, BNP leaders said people in the northern districts have shown the government "a yellow card" for "misrule and failures", and would flash "a red card" it if it does not learn from the experience. AL President Sheikh

Hasina on Thursday directed her party colleagues to take stern action against rebel candidates. The party might expel

those who worked against the AL-backed mayoral candidates in the last week's polls. The rebels, who won in the south, are likely to suffer the same A number of AL leaders

said rebels who would not pull out of the race will face discipline.

Opposition leaders believe the election results will boost the morale of the BNP rank and file, who got demoralised by the 2008 election debacle. The results will also invigorate them before the elections to more than 4,000 union parishads in March-April.

BNP won 193 seats in

2001 parliamentary elections but secured only 29 in the last parliamentary polls, the party's worst show in the last three decades. On the other hand, AL in the last national election got 234 seats, the highest since the 1973 parliamentary election.

The January 22 upazila parishad elections were also dominated by ALbacked candidates, who won about 80 percent of the posts of UP chairman.

AL-backed candidates secured all four mayoral posts in Rajshahi, Khulna, Barisal and Sylhet city corporation polls in August 2008.

For BNP, things began to change for the better in the Chittagong City Corporation election in June 2008. Its mayoral candidate won the election defeating the AL-supported candidate by a landslide.

Opposition FROM PAGE 20

Paribahan bus at Kalipal around 3:15pm. Farroque was on his way

to Noakhali from Chittagong. They were rushed to a local

clinic. The opposition chief whip was out of danger but the condition of the two others were critical, doctors said.

Home minister

FROM PAGE 1

sub-inspector of Sher-e-Bangla Nagar Police Station were suspended following the killing of Fazlul Huq.

Sahara said a vested quarter has been active for a month to create a law and order situation and tarnish the reputation of the country it gained over the last two She, for the first time,

voiced concern about law and order deterioration in public. She has always been

dismissing allegations of law and order situation even after the killings of 15 people in the first ten days of the New Year.

The home minister said police officials will be transferred if they fail to contain crime inside their jurisdiction. The Dhaka Metropolitan Police commissioner and inspector general of police were asked to replace them with efficient persons, she added.

BNP ahead

AL and BNP leaders in the district said they could win in more municipalities had

dates. Many grassroots leaders of both the parties worked for the rebel candidates, as the party did not back the

In Kurigram municipality, BNP rebel candidate Nurul Islam Nuru secured 10,438 votes to win the mayor post. AL rebel Abdul Jalil came second with 9,897 votes while the AL-backed candi-

Kaziul Islam was supported by AL MP Zafar Ali of Kurigram-2 while Abdul Jalil by the party's Kurigram municipality unit, said district AL member Shajahan Ali.

Nurul Islam, the BNP rebel, won here as the grassroots worked for him, and not for sitting mayor Abu Baker Siddique.

Hossain won in Syedpur municipality under Nilphamari district. JP and AL nominated a candidate each here.

pality, BNP did not back sitting Mayor Sahed Kamal Choudhury, as party Joint Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir objected to his candidature. BNP sources said Fakhrul

chose BNP leader Chowdhury Golam Sarwar.

single candidate in several municipalities due to some local equations. It hindered AL candidates' success in many municipalities," said Khaled Mahmud Rangpur division.

lost popularity, as the party obtained more votes than BNP, he added.

"We could have won in more municipalities in Rangpur division if we could offer one candidate for mayor in a municipality, said Asadul Habib Dulu central working committee member of BNP.

AL cashes

FROM PAGE 20 Rajshahi divisions on Wednesday.

BNP workers said BNP central did not back the candidates they were rooting for, who they believed were more likely to win. Some said rebel candidates chipped away vital number of votes that eventually let rivals win.

In Bhola municipality, BNP grassroots selected Golam Nobi Alomgir, president of district BNP, for their mayoral candidate but Bhola BNP Vice-President Safiur Rahman also ran as a rebel candidate. This resulted in the victory of a rival.

In Patuakhali municipality, BNP grassroots selected Maksud Ahmed Bayezid Panna, joint-convener of district BNP but BNP central published a list on January 1 of pro-BNP candidates and the name of incumbent mayor Moshtaq Ahmed was

on it. Even though BNP central later issued a letter saying it is backing Panna, but the damage was done. The grassroots were divided into two, ultimately costing BNP the

In Patharghata municipality of Barguna, independ ent candidate Mollik Md Iyub won. BNP campaign activities in the area were very weak and disorganised.

BNP grassroots in Kalapara municipality of Patuakhali said state minister for water resources also a local lawmaker, stayed in Kalapara on election day influencing the outcome of the polls.

However, in Amtoli municipality of Barguna, there was only one BNP mayoral candidate but he failed to secure victory even though there was one Awami League-back candidate trying to ward off four Awami League rebels. An Awami

League rebel won there. In several municipalities, BNP grassroots blamed the ruling party for rigging the polls.

A positive change

on buildings and walls during the last general elections in December 2008 but this time there is none.

Asked whether any of the candidates offered money to voters Junab said, "This time no one is even offering bidi (cigarette) or paan (betel Another voter Shahidul

Islam, who overheard the conversation, said, "The campaigners here even do not offer a glass of water." Although there are three

contestants for the mayoral post here, voters are expecting a tough battle of ballots between BNP-supported candidate Mohammad Refayet Ullah and Awami League-backed candidate Ashraf Uddin Emu. The other Mehedi Hasan Masum is an independent candidate. Voters of this municipal-

ity will elect nine councillors out of 59 candidates and three women councillors for the reserved seats out of 12 aspirants, said an official at

Fog disrupts

flights were cancelled and most of the flights were delayed in both landing and departure due to a very poor visibility, said Shahjalal International Airport authority. Ferry and launch services

on Paturia-Daulatdia route halted for 14 hours from Thursday 8:00pm and on Mawa-Kaurakandi, traffic remained snapped for around 11 hours from midnight, reports our correspondents. A long tailback brought

misery to thousands of travel-Ashraf Ullah Khan, man-

ager (commerce) of Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Corporation, Aricha sector, said several thousand vehicles lined up on both side of the river Padma. At least six ferries got stuck

in the middle of the river, reports BSS. All the launches were at least two hours late to anchor

in Sadarghat Launch Terminal in the morning, said Shairf Afzal, port officer of the termi-The lowest temperature was recorded at 6.4 degrees Celsius at Sreemangal and highest 25.6 at Sitakunda. In Dhaka, lowest

On Thursday, Jessore shiv-

temperature was 10.0 degrees

The Met office weather A number of aggrieved | moderate cold wave sweeping through Dhaka, Rajshahi, Rangpur and Khulna divisions may continue today.

the Savar Returning Officer's office.

2 hurt in

explosion

A CORRESPONDENT, Natore

Two people were wounded

in an explosion at an aban-

doned poultry farm at Chak

Nazirpur village in Lalpur

upazila yesterday afternoon.

and Rezaul Karim, 32, both

around 5:45pm while the

duo was making bombs, said

Tariqul Islam, officer-in-

charge (OC) of Lalpur Police

Cosmos Hospital at

Gopalpur and was later

shifted to Rajshahi as his

condition deteriorated. The

location where Rezaul was

receiving treatment could

were recovered from the

In an address on state televi-

sion, he promised to "re-

spect the law and to carry

out the political, economic

and social reforms that have

analyst Magdi Abdelhadi

says Ben Ali's demise will go

down in history as the day

that an Arab population rose

and brought down a head of

Earlier, Ben Ali--who had

said in a TV address on

Thursday night that he

would relinquish power in

2014--said he was dismiss-

ing the government and

dissolving parliament, and

The state of emergency

together in the open, and

imposes a night-time cur-

few. Security forces have

been authorised to open fire

on people not obeying their

Human rights groups say

dozens of people have died

in recent weeks as unrest has

swept the country and secu-

rity forces have cracked

an unemployed graduate set

selling vegetables without a

The protests started after

down on the protests.

held within six months.

The BBC's Arab affairs

spot, added the OC.

been announced".

dictator.

Arab world.

Tunisia

FROM PAGE 20

Some small canisters

not be known immediately.

Majnu was admitted to

natives of the village.

Station.

The injured are Majnu, 28

The accident happened

Natore

Although a few posters were seen pasted in the area during the early campaigning this time, all were removed by the candidates after the returning officer held a meeting with them a few days ago, said a staff of the office. Till yesterday no allega-

tion of intimidation or act of wooing the voters with money were made against any of the candidates by the voters of places including Ulail, Karnapara and Genda areas of the municipality. "We are campaigning everywhere in favour of the BNP-backed candidate, but

faced no intimidation from any quarter," said Shahnaz Parveen, who along with her sister was seen wooing voters on Savar Upazila Complex premises around Our correspondents in

the municipalities awaiting polls sent similar reports on poll atmosphere there.

Hasina

FROM PAGE 20 policy and vision.

The summit will focus on the theme: Enabling Future Energy Solutions. Hasina is likely to address

the opening ceremony of the summit on January 17. Heads of State and Energy

Ministers from developed and developing nations will discuss the global challenges facing policymakers as they seek to boost energy infrastructure, fuel economic growth, meet environmental goals and provide a sustainable future for their countries. UN Secretary-General Ban

Ki-moon will address the Heads of State and international delegates at the WFES. During the PM's visit, manpower export and trade and

investment are likely to figure prominently in talks with the UAE leaders. To enhance economic relations, Bangladesh and the UAE are expected to sign two

significant agreements -- on

promotion and protection of

investment, and on avoidance of double taxation. During the visit, Hasina is likely to hold meetings with UAE President Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan, UAE vicepresident, Prime Minister and Ruler of Dubai Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al

Maktoum and other high level

leaders and ministers. Officials of the foreign affairs and the expatriate welforecast is that the mild to fare ministries here said the government considers the visit highly important as it will help increase manpower export to UAE.

20 years

later.

FROM PAGE 1

ourselves with our humble contribution of 20 years of independent journalism. Over the last 20 years we

have been able to win the hearts and minds of the people of Bangladesh, who rewarded us by making us by far the biggest English language newspaper in the also considering solution to country. providing energy to rural

Yesterday we started our year long countrywide celebrations of our two decades of service to our readers and the nation, with rallies in various districts.

We will inform our readers of our various initiatives as we move forward. Our grand celebration will be held at Bangabandhu Conference Centre on April

As we enter our 21st year, we reiterate our determination to adhere to the highest standards of journalism with our full commitment to democracy and public ser-One such initiative can provide power to 15,000 Readers must have

community clinics across already noticed the expansion of our business section from four to eight pages, and introduction of the new design of the paper. Public response to both of these initiatives has been overwhelming. We hope to introduce several new initiatives to further serve our readers

> favourite newspaper as you have so generously done over the last 20 years. Thank

AL warns rebels

mayoral candidates fail to comply, they would be expelled from the party regardless of their winning or losing in the elections. It said the rebels of Dhaka division would be expelled unless they make the announcement before midnight today and rebels of Chittagong and Sylhet by tomorrow midnight.

day expelled rebel mayoral candidates of Vedorganj municipality in Shariatpur, Bhuapur and Gopalpur municipalities of Tangail and issued show-cause notices to general secretaries of Narail and Sirajganj Awami League as to why they would not be expelled for ignoring party directives. The decision to get rid of

rebel mayoral candidates in Awami League leaders at party chief Sheikh Hasina's political office in Dhanmondi

backed candidates' poor performance in municipal polls in Rajshahi, Rangpur and Khulna divisions. mayoral candidates would be

facing competition from 129 Awami League-rebel candidates in municipalities of Dhaka, Chittagong and Sylhet on January 17 and 18, when the areas go to polls. League candidates in 23

state they regarded as a He says it may rattle the entire post-colonial order in North Africa and the wider municipalities of Chittagong.

Faridganj and Kachua municipalities of Chandpur, four that new elections would be decree bans more than three people from gathering Sherpur and Mymensingh municipalities.

> It is not acceptable that party leaders become candidates on their own against party-supported candidates. There would be zero tolerance on this and they would not be let back into the party even if they win, the meeting observed.

tive measures must be taken to protect the organisational chain of command.

department of SUST, Tajul Islam, 35, of Dakshin Surma and Sukanta Sarker, 30.

rickshaw were heading towards the city from Gowainghat upazila and a speeding truck from the opposite direction hit the vehicle around 5:30pm on the Airport Road in Luckatoora Tea Garden area, locals said. The accident left all of them critically injured. They were immediately

taken to Sylhet MAG Osmani Medical College Hospital. Three of them succumbed to their injuries around 10:00pm, said Officer-in-Charge Khondaker Naoroj Ahmed of Sylhet Kotwali Police Station.

hospital. They are Obaidur Rahman, 50, of

Dakshin Surma and Shaokat Ali, of Ghoramara village.

On January 11, Thinley held summit talks with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and assured Bangladesh of extending cooperation in the hydropower sector, in which the Himalayan country has huge potential.

tural exchange and a Memorandum of Understanding on cooperation in health sector. Dhaka and Thimphu

agreed to intensify their mutually beneficial cooperation in trade and commerce, investment, connectivity and tran-

of South Asia also agreed to

Awami League General Secretary Syed Ashraful Islam, Advisory Council Member HT Imam, leaders Mahbubul Alam Hanif, Jahangir Kabir Nanak talked to rebel candidates of a number of munici-

They also talked to lawmakers, district and upazila unit presidents and general secretaries, upazila chairmen and vice-chairmen and instructed them to work for the victory of the party-

AL leader

College morgue for autopsy. Home Minister Sahara Khatun, State Minister for

body. Md Shaheen, a tea stall owner and witness of the incident, said one of the assailants called Fazlul by his name and asked him to stop as he was entering the mosque. Fazlul sensed some-

Fazlul up and shot him, said Shaheen, adding that the gang fled the scene on a CNG-run-auto-rickshaw and two motorbikes. On the way they hurled three bombs and shot two blanks to panic the on lookers and make an

7:00pm. Shahnaz Begum, Fazlul's

sister and general secretary of Mohila AL of the same ward, told The Daily Star that like Nur Mohammad her brother was a councillor aspirant of the ward in the upcoming Dhaka City Corporation polls.

group in the area might have killed Fazlul. The new OC of Sher-e-

Bangla Nagar Police Station said they are raiding different places in the capital to catch the criminals.

Mauritius

International Airport, told The Daily Star an Emirates Airlines flight carrying the deceased landed at 8:25pm. The bodies of Akther, Al

Mamun, Joy Hossain, Mostafijor Rahman, Rakibul Hasan, Mohammed Saidur, Sagor, Jahidul, Moktar and Selim were handed over to relatives around 10:30pm, cargo terminal officials said.

It could not be known why the body of Elias Gazi did not

their vehicle. A Mauritius national also died in the acci-

The dead and injured

US to provide FROM PAGE 20

documentary assistance the United States may provide. Later, contacted by The Daily Star, the minister said

Liberation War. prosecutors and investigators assigned for the war crimes

trial, he added.

criminals if the trial is held in compliance with international and domestic laws. He added that the judges and the prosecutors of the International Crimes Tribunal have shown interest in getting

assistance in terms of training and case histories of war crimes trials in other coun-The law minister yesterday

said the US envoy asked him to ensure that the list of witnesses and witness accounts are sent to the defence attorneys three weeks before the trial.

Greeting the victors Enamul Haque admitted that his favourites could not come out successful as local AL leaders did not back

them. Poura Jamaat secretary Aminul Islam won at Godagari beating local AL president Monirul Islam.

questioned Charghat upazila AL General Secretary Rahenul Haq. Haq's wife and AL dissident Nargis Khatun won the polls race at Charghat. She defeated the AL favourite,

nominated by local law-

maker. She has now become

the lone female mayor in Rajshahi division. Shahriar Alam MP of Charghat-Bagha said, "I always respect him [Rahenul], but all his observations are not good. Selections of candidates were done following local

opinions." "There was a lack of coordination between the MPs and the district AL committees. Leaders chose candidates based on their own followers' opinions and the results are there before the nation," said Rajshahi district AL president Tajul Islam Faruk.

Two candidates picked by AL lawmaker Enamul Haque at Bagmara upazila 10,000 votes. lost to AL rebel and BNPsupported candidates at Bhawaniganj and Taherpur municipalities.

Conflicts push

The total votes bagged by "I am involved in AL politics Monirul and AL rebel Rabiul since my student life and Alam far exceed the votes became an upazila unit gathered by Aminul. Local secretary successively. How AL wanted Rabiul as candican I obey a new leader who date, but central AL nomiis just a fresher and doesn't nated Monirul. show minimum respect?" The same were the cases at Katakhali of Rajshahi and

> Jamaat came out successful. At Joypurhat municipality, independent candidate Abdul Aziz Mollah won the race against BNP-backed Fazlur Rahman. AL expelled Aziz months before the

elections.

Raiganj of Sirajganj where

have bagged some more mayoral posts had not its city unit interfered with the activities of the district unit. The huge defeat of ALsupported candidate in Natore municipality has

revealed the sharp division

Rajshahi district BNP

president Nadim Mostafa

said BNP favourites would

between the ruling party leaders and activists. Local lawmaker and State Minister for Youth and Sports Ahad Ali Sarkar supported Kamrul Islam who lost to BNP-backed candidate Emdadul Haq Al Mamun by more than

Party insiders said Jubo League leaders and activists led by its president Shariful Islam Ramjan did not support Kamrul. "Ramjan also wanted to join the race, but he with-

drew his candidature after Kamrul got support from the state minister. Ramjan and his followers did not vote for Kamrul," a local AL leader told The Daily Star.

FROM PAGE 20

there been no rebel candi-

candidates of their choice.

date Kaziul Islam stood third with 9,857 votes.

The MP, however, denied his involvement in Kaziul's nomination.

BNP candidate Amjad

In Thakurgaon munici-

AL-backed candidate SMA Moyeen won here. "We could not nominate

Chowdhury, organising secretary of the party for It does not mean that AL

C and maximum 18.5, said Met

ered at 4.6 degrees C.

Govt plans FROM PAGE 1 sector, especially surrounding coal, an investment of

billions of dollars is required

to develop the road, water

and rail infrastructure to transport raw materials and equipment. He observed that in the last two years, the government moved for procurement of 4,000MW of power -- something that no other

government had done before. This year, the government would move for procurement of the similar scale and complete tendering for setting up of a terminal to import Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) as an alternative backup for the country's

declining gas supplies. "Besides, we are also considering a plan to import Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) from Shahbazpur Gas Field in Bhola to serve the gas starving regions (this gas field is largely unutilised). Similarly, we can transport some excess gas from the Sylhet region through rail to Chittagong," said Towfiq-e-Elahi.

The Asian Development

Bank (ADB) was offering loans for 3,000MW solar power to its member countries, the energy adviser noted, adding that he had sought loans for 500MW from the bank. The ADB has not responded to the proposal, but it gave an initial positive feedback. "How do we utilise this opportunity? I have dis-

graduates or students to conduct research on various aspects of energy for home grown solutions, said cussed the matter with Towfiq-e-Elahi, adding that non-resident Bangladeshi Agriculture Minister Matia Chowdhury and she proexperts will be involved in posed that we install 1MW this council.

solar unit in each upazila. This may be a good idea. A 1MW solar unit will take three acres of land and can pave the way to spread solar plants across the country by 2012," said the adviser. He said the government is

people -- 80 percent of the country's population, who have no access to commercial fuel. "Bangladesh Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (BCSIR) is preparing a strategy paper on how to address this issue so that

these people no longer have

to depend on firewood and

leaves for primary fuel," he The government is also taking initiatives for energy services for the poor, he said pointing out that most of the poor people cannot afford power, which they should to

change their lives.

the country from where the poor people would get the services dependent of The government is also forming National Energy Research Council in line with the existing National Agriculture Research Council. This new council will open scope for local and advertisers. researchers, engineering

In our future journey to strengthen democracy and build a prosperous Bangladesh, support your

FROM PAGE 1 backing the pro-grand alliance candidates. It also said if the rebel

The Awami League yester-

municipal polls with firm hands was made during a marathon meeting of top The decision was made following grand alliance-

Grand alliance-backed There are 42 rebel Awami

municipalities of Dhaka division, 11 in 10 municipalities of Sylhet and 76 in 33 The Awami League has five rebel candidates each in

each in Shahrasti municipality of Chandpur, Gopalganj and Tungipara municipalities, three each in Hajigan and Matlob municipalities of Chandpur, Raipur and Ramganj municipalities of Noakhali, Nangolcoat, Laksam, Chandina municipalities of Comilla, Tarab municipality of Narayanganj,

It also observed that puni-

himself on fire when police SUST student tried to prevent him from

permit. He died a few weeks FROM PAGE 1 Gowainghat upazila in Sylhet and a student of English

The accident occurred when the five in an auto-

The remaining two are undergoing treatment at the

Bhutan PM FROM PAGE 20

Bangladesh and Bhutan signed an agreement on cul-

The two close neighbours

expand cooperation in climate change, tourism, people-to-people contacts, cultural, education, agriculture, health, hydro-power, water resources management sector and employment of skilled and semi-skilled Bangladeshis in Bhutan.

palities and conveyed the

decision.

supported candidates.

FROM PAGE 1

sent to Dhaka Medical LGRD Jahangir Kabir Nanak and senior police officials went to the morgue to see the

thing wrong and started to run but he stumbled and fell down going just a few yards. The criminals pulled

On January 8, criminals shot and injured Nur Mohammad, 68, president of AL ward-41 unit, at his Mamata Bohumukhi Somobai Samity office in West Agargaon Bazar around

Sources in the police said they suspect that Hanna

police at Shahjalal

The ill-fated 11, all hailed from Comilla and Brahmanbaria, were killed and three others wounded when a lorry collided with

The injured are Mamun, Hassan Sarkar, and Sumon.

Bangladeshi workers went to Mauritius on December 30 to work for Pandemonio Co Ltd as sewing machine operators.

(NCIP) at the LGED Auditorium in the capital yesterday. The minister, however, did not elaborate on the kind of

Stephen J Rapp has talked about providing documentary evidence of the war crimes committed during the 1971 Rapp also said the US would consider training the

Rapp said he would consult with the US congress about the support. But the US will only assist Bangladesh in trying war

In a briefing on Thursday,