

Journey amidst high hopes for change 9th parliament goes into it's first session today

After the lapse of over two years in doldrums over the country's political arena, the national parliament elected on December 29 embarks on a new journey today (Sunday) amidst high aspiration of

the people for a change in their socioeconomic life, reports UNB. The 9th parliament will elect a new Speaker and a Deputy Speaker as its first task after the House convenes at 3 pm in the

near-derelect assembly hall of the Sangsad Bhaban, now given a facelift to receive a new regime. President Professor Dr Iajuddin Ahmed, now in the process of exit to make way for his successor, will

deliver his inaugural speech in the first sitting of the new parliament as per constitutional provision. A major business of this parliament will be to deal with a big load of Ordinances made during the just-past military-backed interim regime since the 1/11, 2007 changeover, which will be placed in the maiden session for ratification.

After the presidential address, Law Minister Barrister Shafique Ahmed will lay down all the 122 Ordinances, promulgated by the President in the last two years, for consideration to make those into laws.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has already been elected Leader of the House as her Awami League secured 230 seats in the December 29 polls.

The AL-led Grand Alliance bagged a total of 262 seats.

BNP chairperson Khaleda Zia has been elected Leader of the Opposition by the BNP parliamentary party. Her former ruling party got only 30 seats in the general election, held after turmoil in the political arena over election issues following the end of her past tenure.

The nation placed high expectations on the new parliament coming into being after bitter trials and tribulations of the politicians under the emergency rules that had witnessed the imprisonment of both the main leaders-Hasina and Khaleda-as well as their party heavyweights.

On December 29, the electorate massively voted Awami League to power as Hasina, during the electioneering, made innumerable pledges laid down in a charter of change, attuned to the blowing wind of change all over the present-day world.

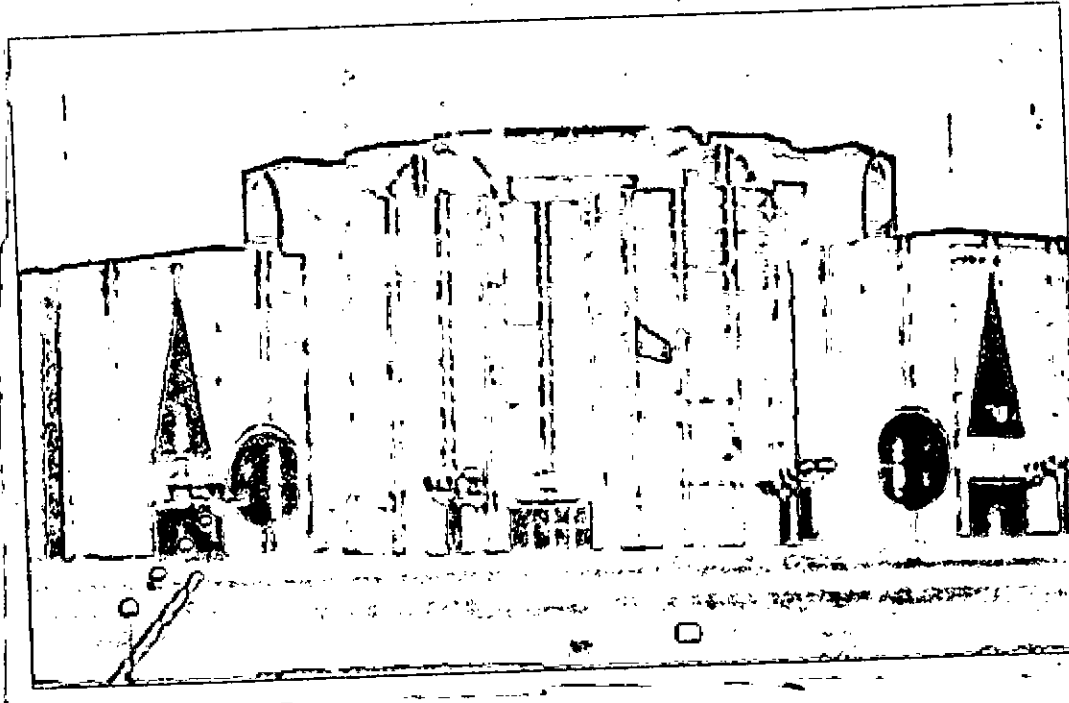
Her poll pledges include bringing down high food prices, resolving power crisis, infrastructure development, free education up to Degree level and employment from each family.

There were also commitments from the ruling party to make the parliament effective for the welfare of the people by putting an end to old legacy of dysfunctional parliament. The ruling party promised to work together with the opposition, which is considered as a partner of government in parliamentary democracy.

The last parliament was dissolved (See Page 11 Col. 7)

Parliament

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solved on October 27, 2006, but the elections could not be held on a scheduled date of January 22, 2007 in the wake of volatile political situation.



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