



The Daily Star

SECOND EDITION

Plus 8-page Star Life Style

PHILIPS sense and simplicity



Category: LCD (Surround Ambient)
Model No.: 42PF9831
TRANSCOM ELECTRONICS Customer Inquiry # 01713-665463
Corporate Sales # 01713-041243-3

COMMITTED TO People's Right to Know

REGD. NO. DA 781

VOL. XVI NO. 338

DHAKA TUESDAY DECEMBER 26, 2006

POUSH 12, 1413 BS

ZILHAJ 4, 1427 HIRI

20 PAGES PLUS STAR LIFESTYLE PRICE: Tk 10.00

www.thedailystar.net

Battle for ballot begins

Nomination paper submission closes today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The battle for ballot between the two major political alliances kicks off today as the candidates of the Awami League (AL)-led grand electoral alliance file their nominations for the election slated for January 22.

Most of the contenders of the BNP-led four-party alliance have already filed nominations. Those who have yet to register their names for the race will do it today, the last day for submitting nominations.

However, none of the alliances has announced the official list of their nominees, as both the sides could not yet reach an understanding over sharing seats for the election.

The final lists will not be made public before the closing date for

withdrawing candidature that is January 3, sources said.

The grand alliance, consisted of the AL-led 14-party combine, Jatiya Party (Ershad), Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), an Islami Oikya Jote faction and Islamic Front, after a series of negotiations among themselves and at the party level have finalised the names of their candidates for the 300 constituencies.

The AL sources claimed that their candidates will submit nominations for 212 constituencies as the party is set to leave 88 seats for its allies.

On the other hand, Jatiya Party (JP-Ershad) claims that it has been allocated 50 seats while the LDP maintains that 27 seats have been left for it to contest. As of last night, the JP kept bargaining for another seven seats while the LDP for three, the sources added.

Among the partners of the 14-party, Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD) claimed that it has got 6 seats, Gono Forum claimed 2, Workers Party 4, a faction of Islami Oikya Jote (IOJ) 2 and Khelafat Majlish 2.

The BNP did not disclose its list of nominees apparently to prevent the disgruntled leaders from joining the rivals, said a party insider. According to arrangements till last night, it has set aside 31 seats for Jamaat-e-Islami, three for the BJP, three for Islami Oikya Jote and one for Anwar Hossain Manju-led Jatiya Party, the sources added.

The grand electoral alliance, which on Sunday said that it would participate in the January polls, yesterday said they will announce in a week whether to continue or withdraw from the electoral race.

The AL Parliamentary Board, meanwhile, has had the candi-

dates' signatures on withdrawal letters in case the party needs to withdraw the nomination papers to boycott the election, sources said.

"We will continue to observe the situation and will decide on our final course of action before the last date for withdrawing candidature," AL Joint General Secretary Obaidul Quader told journalists yesterday.

He said the current atmosphere is still far from being conducive to a free and fair election as the administration is still run by 'the partisan officials'.

The AL leader, however, confirmed that the party has finalised the names of 212 candidates who will file nominations today.

The AL Parliamentary Board that has drawn up the list however

SEE PAGE 15 COL 1

JP claims it got 50 seats from grand alliance

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Jatiya Party (JP) led by HM Ershad has claimed to have got nominations for its candidates in 50 constituencies, including 20 out of the 22 seats in greater Rangpur, to contest the upcoming election under the umbrella of the Awami League-led grand alliance.

But JP insiders said the number of seats is yet to be finalised.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 1

LDP yet to decide poll participation Gets 27 seats from grand alliance

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) is yet to decide about taking part in the upcoming polls, while the deadline for filing the nomination papers ends today.

At a press briefing at the party presidium office in Baridhara yesterday, LDP President AQM Badruddoza Chowdhury observed

SEE PAGE 15 COL 3

Eminent citizens worried over AL deal with bigots

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Eminent citizens of the country yesterday expressed concern over the deal signed between Awami League's (AL's) and Bangladesh Khelafat Majlish on Saturday.

Condemning the deal, the eminent citizens in a joint statement said the people who had issued fatwa (religious decree) before would return with a renewed zeal and drag the country

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5



PHOTO: STAR

Two Nobel laureates of the subcontinent Prof Amartya Sen, left, and Prof Muhammad Yunus greet each other at Osmani Memorial Auditorium yesterday during the inauguration of 'Manikganj Utsab 2006.'

Amartya Sen hails role of women's agencies

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bengali Nobel laureate Prof Amartya Sen yesterday hailed the women's agencies for playing active role in broadening the campaign for better treatment of women to equal rights for all.

The renowned economist, who arrived in Dhaka on Sunday, asserted that the women's agencies must be more concerned with the welfare issue. But an active agency also cannot ignore the urgency of rectifying many inequalities that blight the well-being of women and subject them to unequal treatment, he observed in his Salma Sobhan memorial lecture at the 20th founding anniversary of Ain O Salish

Kendra (ASK) yesterday.

Bangladeshi Nobel hero Prof Muhammad Yunus, philanthropist George Soros and ASK Executive Director Sultana Kamal also spoke at the function chaired by ASK Chairperson Fazle Hasan Abed at National Museum auditorium.

Sen stressed strengthening of agency in order to serve the cause of women. He said the limited role of women's active agency seriously afflicts the lives of all people -- men as well as women, children as well as adults.

He praised ASK, Grameen Bank and Brac for serving the cause of women through bolstering agencies of women.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 6

Prof Sen falls sick at dinner

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Nobel laureate Prof Amartya Sen fainted at a dinner party at a restaurant in the city last night for a few minutes.

"He fell unconscious due to dehydration at around 10:00pm,"

SEE PAGE 15 COL 8

BNP, Jamaat yet to finalise seats

List may come today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP and Jamaat-e-Islami last night failed to reach an agreement over the share of seats issue in the upcoming general elections.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 3

AL's dicey acts confuse leaders

ZAYADUL AHSAN

The Awami League (AL), still deep in dilemma about whether to contest the election despite filing nomination papers, has spread confusion and frustration among its central and grassroots leaders.

The leaders of the AL as well as its allies are now short on answers about why their top leadership, specially Sheikh Hasina, gave her nod to election although many of the 14-party's five-point demands remain unmet. This is more so as the party made the decision in its

presidium meeting in the face of opposition from a majority of its members.

This has forced many party leaders to question why such decisions are made and who play the key role in making the judgements.

The latest unilateral decision of a few top AL leaders to sign a five-point memorandum of understanding (MoU) with a fundamental organisation, Khelafat Majlish, has further deepened the confusion. The disgruntled leaders now point fingers to a few new and old

SEE PAGE 15 COL 4

AL goes for damage control, still faces ally ire

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

AL General Secretary and 14-party alliance Convenor Abdul Jalil yesterday asserted the alliance's 'firm commitment to secularism', as a frantic damage control effort over the highly controversial five-point deal between Awami League (AL) and Bangladesh Khelafat Majlish (BKM).

Pressure from both AL and the 14-party alliance has been mounting to scrap the deal while Jalil

continued to defend the memorandum of understanding (MoU) between AL and BKM signed on Saturday.

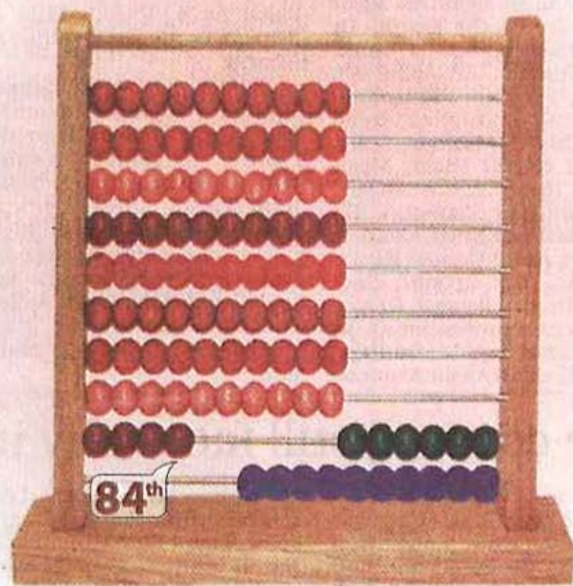
Jalil in his statement after a meeting of the 14-party, however, avoided shedding any light on the heated issue -- the AL-BKM agreement.

But talking to reporters at his residence last night, he denied making any deal about the Kadiani community. He also said his party

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

www.ucbl.com

The final counting for the year 84th Branch of UCB at DHANMONDI



Grand Opening

on December 27, 2006 at Dhanmondi Branch

in Nahar Green Summit (1st Floor),
Plot No- 305 (Old) 43 (New), Road- 27 (Old) 16 (New), Dhanmondi, Dhaka

Inauguration by:
Hajee Yunus Ahmed

Chairman, Board of Directors, United Commercial Bank Ltd.

UCB

United Commercial Bank Ltd.
UNITED WE ACHIEVE

60 Motijheel C/A, Dhaka 1000, PABX: 9568690-93, 9555075-77 Fax: 88-02-9560587 Email: info@ucbl.com

Our Country

Our Bank

DBBL'S

38th Branch Opens today

Reaz Tower, Gazipur Chowrasta, Gazipur

The following Branch will be opened tomorrow

Imamgonj Branch
Roy Iswar Chandra Shil Bahadur Street
41 Imamgonj, Dhaka

Dutch-Bangla Bank Limited
YOUR TRUSTED PARTNER