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Witnessing the price hike parody



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BNP doesn't want election

PM tells huge BCL rally, asks all to stay alert, thwart plot against the country's progress

STAR REPORT

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said the BNP doesn't want to take part in elections, rather it wants to play with people's voting rights once again.

"Election is not on their [BNP's] mind ... The BNP doesn't want the country's welfare. They want to destroy it," she told a Chhatra League rally at the capital's Suhrawardy Udyan.

In the 2008 national election, the BNP-led 20-party alliance got only 30 seats in parliament, the PM said, asking the BCL activists to remind people about this.

Urging people to stay alert, the AL president said the BNP is trying to destroy the electoral system.

Hasina asked the leaders and activists of the pro-Awami League student body to remain vigilant against plots to hinder the country's progress.

"My Chhatra League boys and girls will be the leaders of the Smart Bangladesh 2041. I expect that from you. No one can stop Bangladesh's



The long-anticipated Dhaka Elevated Expressway is scheduled to be inaugurated today by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. In the first phase, the 11.5km airport-Farmgate section of the 19.73km expressway will be opened to traffic tomorrow. The expressway is expected to ease the city's chronic traffic congestion. The photo was recently taken in Kawla area near the Dhaka airport.

PHOTO: NAIMUR RAHMAN

DHAKA'S FIRST ELEVATED EXPRESSWAY

All set for grand opening

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The long-awaited Dhaka Elevated Expressway is set to be inaugurated today partially, bringing new hope for easing the perennial traffic woes in the capital.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will open the 11.5km airport-Farmgate section of the 19.73km expressway, the first one in the country, in the afternoon.

Once the structure is opened to traffic tomorrow, it would take around 10 minutes for vehicles to reach Farmgate from the airport, around 50 minutes less than what it takes now.

The partial opening of the expressway is taking place more than a decade after the project was taken up to ease the city's traffic jams.

This is the first project in the transport sector being implemented under the public-private partnership (PPP) with foreign investment.

The entire expressway is expected to be opened to vehicles next year.

"We have completed all preparations for the opening of the expressway by the prime minister," Bridges Division Secretary Monjur Hossain told The Daily Star on Thursday.

The PM's car will enter the expressway from the north end in Kawla area near the Hazrat

Shahjalal International Airport and will pay toll at the toll plaza there, Monjur said.

Hasina will get off the expressway in Tejgaon area to join a civic rally at the old trade fare ground in Agargaon around 4:00pm.

The premier will inaugurate the expressway there, said Monjur, also the executive director of Bangladesh Bridge Authority (BBA).

Meanwhile, the authorities have already decorated the expressway with placards and flags. However, those will be removed before the opening of the structure to traffic at 6:00am tomorrow, sources said.

The project authorities said they have set up a control centre in Kuril area for smooth movement of traffic. Chinese firm China Shandong International Economic and Technical Corporation, one of the three private partners of the PPP project, will operate the control centre, they said.

The airport-Farmgate section via Kuril, Banani, Mohakhali and Tejgaon will serve as an alternative route to and from the airport, one of the busiest in the city.

This section with 15 ramps will help vehicles avoid traffic-choked crossings and roads. Thirteen of the ramps will be opened tomorrow.

The expressway will be off-limits to three-

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This govt has to step down

Says BNP on founding anniv

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Awami League government would be forced to step down through a peaceful movement, BNP standing committee member Abdul Moyeen Khan said yesterday.

"The Awami League talks about democracy, but in reality, it does not believe in democracy. We will restore democracy in the country after forcing the government to quit," he said while addressing a rally in front of Nayapaltan party office to observe its 45th founding anniversary.

Speaking as the chief guest, Moyeen said, "The Awami League government has established an autocracy in the country. It wants to cling to power by oppressing people. But the people will not let it happen."

A large number of BNP leaders and activists were seen on the street from Nightingale intersection to Notre Dame College intersection and nearby areas to join the rally that had begun at 3:00pm, halting traffic in the area.

They arrived at the rally venue with small processions. They wore colourful caps, carried placards and posters bearing anti-government slogans.

The day's programme started with BNP leaders paying homage to party founder and president Ziaur Rahman's grave at the capital's Sher-e-Bangla Nagar in the morning.

Remarking on the party's key principles, BNP standing committee member Amir Khosru Mahmud Chowdhury said the party was formed to restore democracy and people's voting rights, which are now under threat again.

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Sri Lanka pays back Bangladesh \$100m more

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Sri Lanka on Thursday paid back another \$100 million of the \$200 million it took from Bangladesh in a currency swap agreement two years ago, a top official of Bangladesh Bank said yesterday.

With the latest instalment, the Island nation paid back a total of \$150 million, according to Md Mezbaul Haque, the central bank's spokesman.

The repayment comes more than a year and a half after the original agreed date. Sri Lanka and Bangladesh entered into currency swap agreements in August 2021.

Sri Lanka repaid \$50 million as the first instalment on August 17.

"We are hopeful that the rest of the amount will be cleared by September," said Haque.

When the currency swap deal was agreed, Sri Lanka was supposed to repay

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Bangladesh Chhatra League leaders and activists at a rally addressed by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at Suhrawardy Udyan in the capital. The pro-Awami League student body organised the event yesterday.

PHOTO: BSS

BNP'S NATIONWIDE PROGRAMMES Over 100 hurt in AL-BNP clashes

13 cops among them; BNP alleges obstruction in six districts

STAR REPORT

Over 100 people, including 13 police personnel, were injured as activists of Awami League and BNP clashed in Netrakona, Patuakhali, Magura, Gaibandha and Bogura yesterday.

BNP leaders alleged they were obstructed by AL activists and police from holding their party's founding anniversary programmes.

In Netrakona's Kalmakanda, 50 people, including four police personnel, were wounded.

Locals said BNP activists started gathering in front of their party office in Paschim Marcas area around noon. Around the same time, AL men took out a procession in the same area and attempted to stop BNP activists from joining their programme, which led to a clash.

MA Khair, convener of Kalmakanda upazila BNP, said, "Awami League men attacked us, and police opened fire on our procession, leaving 20 activists injured."

Abul Kalam, officer-in-charge of Kalmakanda Police Station, said, "BNP activists were causing chaos by torching tyres, prompting police to intervene. They threw brick chunks at police, injuring four police personnel."

In Patuakhali, 13 people, including three police personnel, were injured in Dashmina upazila.

Shah Alam Shanu, general secretary of Dashmina upazila BNP, said, "Police attacked our procession at Pujakhala without any provocation, leaving 10 activists wounded."

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