



B1

'Data pack limits to stop cheating'



P11

Joty and Co expect 'best result' in Asian Games



P10

Souls: Through the eyes of its founder



P7

China flies 28 warplanes around Taiwan

EC, AL already in election mode

JP planning to go it alone

PARTHA PRATIM BHATTACHARJEE and MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR

The Election Commission and Awami League seem to have started taking preparations for the coming national election.

The Jatiya Party, the main opposition in parliament, is also making preparations to participate on its own, not part of the AL-led alliance.

The AL and the JP are currently finalising their election manifestos and the lists of lawmaker nominees.

AL chief Sheikh Hasina started campaigning on August 2 in Rangpur by seeking votes. She asked the AL lawmakers to stay in their constituencies, make door-to-door visits to the constituents and quell feuds within the party.

To set an example, she even stayed at her Gopalganj-3 constituency for two days in July and met voters.

Almost all members of the ruling 14-party alliance are also getting ready for polls slated for January next year.

AL Joint General Secretary Mahbubul

Alam Hanif told The Daily Star that the AL is completely focused on the 12th national election.

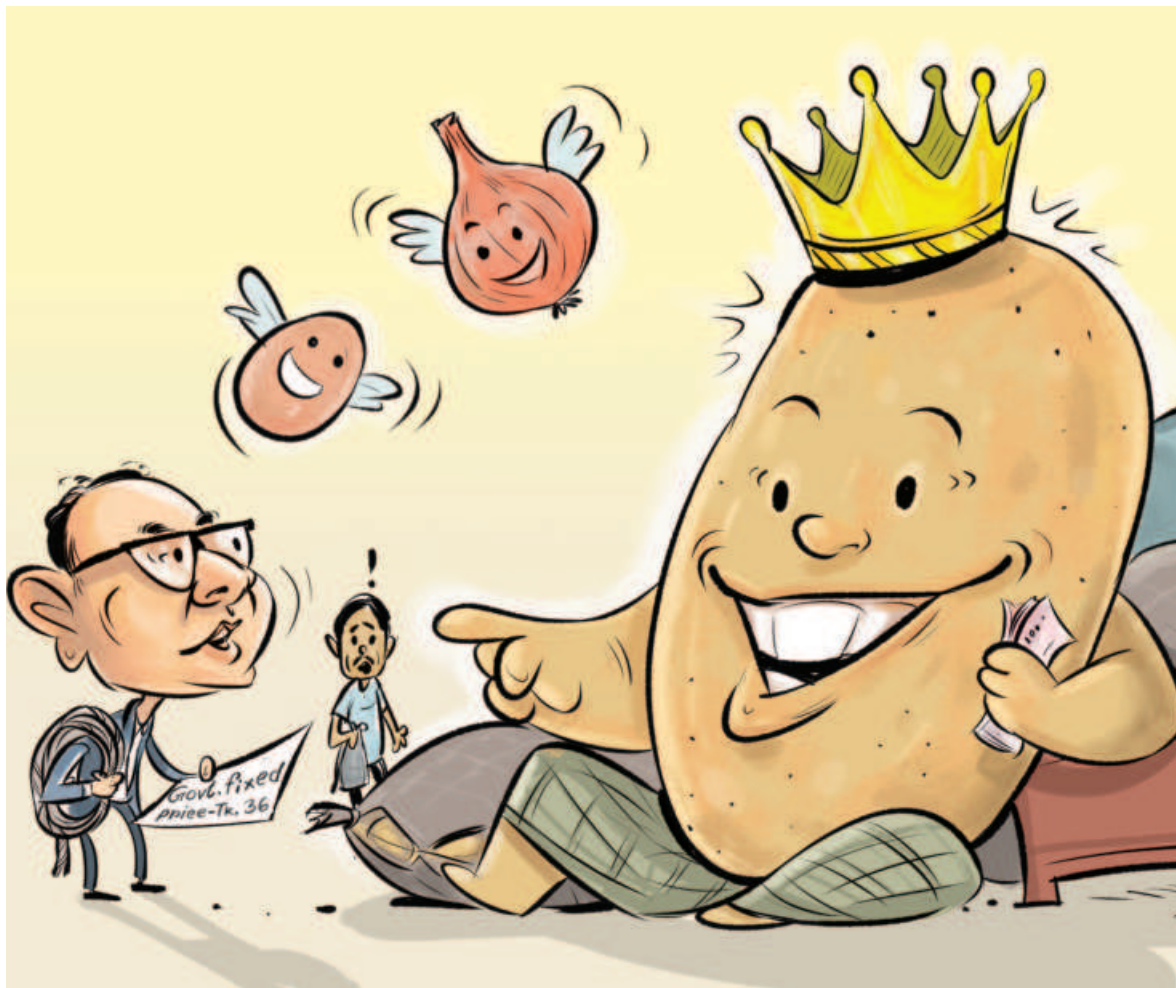
"We are taking all-out preparations for the election. We are meeting people, highlighting our government's achievements, collecting information

The EC has redrawn 10 constituencies, registered two new political parties, updated the voters' list, and made a primary list of 42,350 polling centres.

to find the fittest nominees, organising rallies across the country, taking steps to keep grassroots united by resolving rifts, making door-to-door visits to woo voters, and drafting our manifesto," he said.

Meanwhile, the EC has redrawn 10 constituencies, registered two new political parties, updated the voters' list, and made a primary list of 42,350 polling centres.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4



Potato price keeps ticking up despite cap

SUKANTA HALDER and TANJIL HASAN

The price of potato went up further after the government on Thursday announced a price cap for the tuber and began market drives to check the soaring price of the tuber.

On Thursday, the government fixed the price of potatoes, long considered the cheapest staple on the dinner table, at Tk 35-36 a kilogram,

After the government announced the price cap, potato sales at the various cold storages in Munshiganj district, which accounts for about one-third of potato supplies, have almost stopped.

after prices were going beyond the reach of the poor and the low-income demographic at Tk 42 to Tk 45 a kg.

Yesterday, a kg of potato sold for Tk 45 to Tk 50, the highest since October 2020, according to data from the state-run Trading Corporation of Bangladesh.

Wholesalers and retailers say that it is not possible to bring down the price of potatoes without increasing the supply.

"You cannot bring down the price in this way," said Mohammad Sabur, a wholesaler in Karwan Bazar.

Sabur has been able to procure half the quantity of potatoes that he normally does.

"This is why the price is rising," he said.

What cost Tk 2,900 last week cost Tk 3,000 yesterday, said Humayun Kabir, a retailer in the West Tejuri Bazar area at the capital's Farmgate.

He is selling potatoes, which he sources in sacks of 65 kg, at Tk 46-50 a kg.

"The price keeps rising at the wholesale level – what can I do other than raise the price too? I bought a sack of potatoes last week for Tk 2,900. Today, I got the same sack for Tk 3,000," he said yesterday.

And it is unlikely that the price would be coming down any soon.

After the government announced the price cap, potato sales at the various cold storages in Munshiganj district, which accounts for about one-third of potato supplies, have almost stopped.

No one took out their potato from the cold storage in the last two days, said Abdul Malek, manager of Tongibari Cold Storage at East Mukterpur in Munshiganj.

"Maybe they are not able to sell their potatoes or did not want to," he added.

On September 13, potatoes from the cold storage were selling at Tk 36-37 per kg, said

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

BNP to go all out to unseat the govt

The party to announce fresh programmes today

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA

While the ruling Awami League is already gearing up for the election, opposition BNP is concentrating its efforts on forcing the government to accept the demand for polls under a non-partisan interim administration.

BNP sources say the party would intensify its movement in the coming days to press home its demand.

As part of this, it will announce a series of rallies and road marches for this month to build up a momentum for the final push.

Sources said the party wants to achieve the goal of its movement – resignation of the government and formation of a nonparty administration – ahead of the announcement of the election schedule, expected in November.

The general election is slated for early January next year.

"Our programmes in September and mid-October will prepare the ground for the final phase of the movement," said a BNP standing committee member, wishing anonymity.

He said the programmes will be announced in phases to bring people on board its movement for a non-partisan polls-time government.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 2

12 hurt as microbus torched in Natore

Claims BNP

STAR REPORT

BNP leaders in Natore yesterday alleged that Awami League activists set fire to a microbus of BNP activists while they were going to join the party's road march in Bogura.

A team of police and firefighters rushed to the spot and brought the fire under control around 10:30am in Dalsarak area of Natore, said Akhter Hamid Khan, deputy assistant director of Natore fire service.

Natore district BNP convener Shahidul Islam Bachchu said, "Led by Awami League activist Rashidul Islam Koyel, ruling party activists attacked BNP leaders and activists and set fire to the microbus. At least 12 leaders and activists of Bagatipara upazila unit of Chhatra Dal were injured."

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4

Siraj sets up India's 8th Asia Cup crown

AFP, Colombo

Pace bowler Mohammed Siraj returned figures of 6-21 to lead India's rout of Sri Lanka by 10 wickets as they clinched their eighth Asia Cup title on Sunday.

Siraj got four wickets in one over to help skittle Sri Lanka out for 50, a total the Indian openers Ishan Kishan and Shubman Gill surpassed in 6.1 overs for an impressive victory ahead of next month's ODI World Cup at home.

Sri Lanka's miserably low total in the 50-over contest left a nearly packed house disappointed after they witnessed just 116 minutes of play.

The hosts elected to bat first following a delayed start due to rain and pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah struck first with the wicket of Kusal Perera, caught behind for a duck in the first over.

Siraj soon took over as

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4



Mohammed Siraj jumps in the air as Virat Kohli and Shubman Gill join in celebration following one of his six wickets during India's 10-wicket victory over Sri Lanka in the final of the Asia Cup at the R Premadasa Stadium in Colombo yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

UNIVERSAL PENSION SCHEME About 13,000 sign up in first month

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

About 13,000 people enrolled on the universal pension system in the month since Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina flagged it off, with private sector employees making the majority.

As of 5:00pm yesterday, 12,972 people enrolled for the UPS, depositing a total of Tk 7.7 crore, according to the National Pension Authority (NPA).

The Progoti scheme, which is meant for private sector employers, saw 6,194 enrolments. They deposited a total of Tk 4.1 crore.

The Surokkha scheme, which is designed for the self-employed and the informal sector workers like farmers, rickshaw pullers and day labourers, saw the next highest number of enrolments: 5,020.

Some 1,360 people signed up for the ultra-poor group's Somota scheme, while the Probash scheme for the expatriates had 398 takers.

People belonging to the 31-40 age group have so far enrolled the most for the month-old pension scheme, according to NPA officials.

Two separate funds will be created: one to meet the administrative expenses of the NPA and the other will be created with the money deposited by the subscribers, said finance ministry officials.

The money deposited by the subscribers will be invested in profitable ventures and a set of rules will be formulated soon in this regard, they added.

Citizens above the age of 18 can register for the scheme at the dedicated portal www.upension.gov.bd.

People will have to submit an application through the online portal of the pension authority for enrolment.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

BUSINESS

Eskayef's 3rd unit wins FDA nod

SK+F

Eskayef Pharmaceuticals Limited, one of the top pharmaceutical companies in Bangladesh, has received approval from the United States Food and Drug Administration (US FDA) for its third manufacturing unit located in Gazipur's Tongi.

The company got the go-ahead recently for its sterile manufacturing unit at Faraaz Ayaaz Hossain Building from the most stringent regulatory authority in the world. Eskayef secured approval for its Sterile Unit-1 in September 2022 and Oral Solid Unit in March 2022, becoming the lone company in Bangladesh to have won approval for three manufacturing units from the FDA.

It has become the only Bangladeshi company to have injectable manufacturing units approved by the FDA.

STORY ON B1