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SHAH CEMENT

KHULNA-DARSHANA DOUBLE RAIL TRACK Half of project period gone for nothing

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

Two and a half years ago, the government had approved a project to build a double rail line along the existing single track from Khulna to Darshana.

The project, aimed at boosting trade activities with neighbouring countries using the Mongla port, was supposed to be implemented from January 2018 till December 2022 at a cost of Tk 3,506.75 crore, of which India will provide 77 percent as loan.

Around half the project period has elapsed, but the project authorities have not even appointed a consultant yet, let alone starting the physical work.

The authorities now say they have to extend the project's deadline as it will take at least two more years to start the physical work.

This is also likely to escalate the cost of the project.

The finance ministry had already categorised this as a "low priority project", meaning it would not get an allocation from the annual development programme (ADP), except for the salaries and allowances of project officials.

At the steering committee meeting on the project at Rail Bhaban on Sunday, the project authorities sought elevation of the project category to "medium level".

They said only Tk 3.75 lakh had been released against the demand of Tk 3.27 crore this fiscal year and if the funds were not released as per the demand, it would create problems.

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Three women and two children crammed onto a rickshaw in the capital's Tejgaon area. Having more than two passengers on a rickshaw, and that too on a busy road, could make way for fatal accidents. None of them were wearing masks; neither was the passenger in the pick-up next to them. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

World sees record weekly Covid-19 cases

India logs lowest cases in a month

AGENCIES

The coronavirus pandemic appears to be accelerating worldwide, with new cases soaring last week to a new seven-day high of almost two million, even as new deaths decreased, WHO statistics showed.

In a fresh global update, the World Health Organization said late Monday that during the week ending on September 20, 1,998,897 new cases were registered around the world.

That marks a six-percent increase over a week earlier and "the highest number of reported cases in a single week since the beginning of the epidemic," the UN health agency said.

Since the coronavirus first surfaced in China late last year, it has infected more than 31 million people around the globe and has killed more than 965,000, according to an AFP tally.

Nearly all regions of the world saw an increase in cases.

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PATURIA-DAULATDIA ROUTE Ferry crisis deals double blow

ZAHANGIR SHAH, Manikganj

Ferry services on Paturia-Daulatdia route have been disrupted for the last three days due to shortage of vessels.

Truckers are the worst sufferers as they have to wait for hours to board ferries and cross the Padma.

Twelve out of 19 ferries are operating on the route now. Three are at Narayanganj dockyard for repairs and four others are anchored at the floating workshop near the Paturia ferry terminal as they have issues.

Usually, 14-15 ferries are in operation on the route, said Abdus Sattar, assistant general manager (marine) of Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Corporation (BIWTC) at Aricha regional office.

The ferry shortage makes the situation worse as there is a huge flow of vehicles on the route. Vehicles which would have used Shimulia-Kathalbari route are now crossing the river via the Paturia-Daulatdia route. Ferries are running on the Shimulia-Kathalbari route on a limited scale due to poor navigability.

Several hundreds goods-laden trucks are stranded at the Paturia end of Manikganj and the Daulatdia end of Rajbari as passenger, emergency and perishable goods-laden vehicles are getting priority to board ferries.

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FIRST YEAR OF BANGLADESH BANGABANDHU'S NATION-BUILDING CHALLENGES

UN to discuss admission of Bangladesh

September 23, 1972

SHAMSUDDOZA SAJEN

GENERAL ASSEMBLY AGREES TO BANGLADESH'S MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

The United Nations General Assembly today agrees to discuss the question of admission of Bangladesh during its current session. A recommendation made to this effect by the general committee at the initiative of Yugoslavia was accepted by the Assembly.

In the discussion, Pakistan, China and Albania express their opposition to the consideration of the issue of Bangladesh's admission.

Turkey, Iran and Nigeria take the stand that an opportunity should be given to the parties concerned to settle their differences in terms of the UN resolutions before considering the admission of Bangladesh in the Assembly.

Belgium, which had supported Bangladesh in the Security Council and also at the meeting of the General Assembly, says that this is an inopportune time to consider the question. The Belgian delegation feels that any immediate discussion would endanger the "intricate process of detente and reconciliation" in the Subcontinent.

DRIVE AGAINST CORRUPTION WILL CONTINUE

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RIGHTS TO PROPERTIES Hindu, Buddhist women must have equal claims

SC lawyer serves notice on govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A Supreme Court lawyer has served a notice on the government requesting it to formulate a law prescribing an equal and absolute right of Hindu and Buddhist women on their parents' and husbands' properties.

Advocate Tanoy Kumar Saha sent the notice to the secretaries to the ministries of cabinet, law and religious affairs on Sunday, saying that Bangladesh is under an obligation to enact or to frame such policies that will eradicate all sorts of discrimination on any ground as it is guaranteed by the constitution.

The lawyer said in the notice that Bangladesh has been promoting the need for women's empowerment for the purpose of poverty alleviation over the last few decades.

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Man buys elephant to fulfill wife's 'divine dream'

S DILIP ROY



In a rare incident, a farmer from Ratidhar Dewti village of Lalmonirhat has bought an elephant worth Tk 16.5 lakh in order to obey "divine instructions received by his wife in her dreams".

Dulal Chandra Roy, 46, had to sell off most of his cultivable lands to be able to buy the majestic animal. He has also hired a mahout for Tk 15,000 a month to take care of it.

Tulsi Rani, Dulal's wife, supposedly had a dream a few years ago where she received divine instruction to buy and rear animals including a horse, swan, goat and elephant.

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Seven steel workers get burned in work mishap

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Seven workers of a still mill sustained burn injuries at their workplace and were admitted to Chattogram Medical College Hospital (CMCH) Burn Unit yesterday noon.

Among the seven, six have suffered from inhalation burn injuries and kept on observation at the Burn and Plastic Surgery unit of CMCH, said medical sources.

However, the reason and place behind the fire could not be known immediately as police and fire service officials have no information regarding the incident.

The injured workers are Md Shahed, 28, Keu Chohan, 45, Md Nuruzaman, 40, Rabindra, Amir Hossain, 27, and Shahin Alam, 27, and Tipu Sultan. They were rushed to the CMCH around 2:00pm.

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Support builds for Trump top court pick

Mitt Romney says Senate should vote

REUTERS, Washington

President Donald Trump's push to cement a conservative majority on the Supreme Court received a boost yesterday as a longtime rival, Republican Senator Mitt Romney, said the chamber should vote on a replacement for liberal Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg.

Romney's decision left Democrats with few hopes of blocking Senate confirmation of the Republican president's third appointment to the

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Rough sea conditions due to a depression have forced fishermen to moor their boats and trawlers ashore. Meanwhile, they are catching up on other necessary work, like preparing the nets, before going out to the Bay once it is calm. The photo was taken yesterday at Chattogram city's Fishery Ghat area.

PHOTO: RAJIB RAHMAN

Freedom fighters under pressure

Goons in Banskhalia swooped on them several times for protesting fellow fighter's burial without guard of honour

MOSTAFA YOUSUF, Chattogram

Freedom fighters in Chattogram's Banskhalia upazila have come under several attacks in recent times after they protested the authorities' failure to give a guard of honour to one of their fellow freedom fighters before his burial in late July.

Ali Ashraf, 87, former labour affairs secretary of Banskhalia Awami League, died on 26 July after suffering from age-old complications at Chattogram Medical College Hospital.

He was the elder brother of Moulvi Syed Ahmed, the founding president of Chattogram Jubo League.

Ashraf's family, as well as freedom fighters' organisations in Chattogram, informed the Banskhalia upazila administration to organise a guard of honour before his namaz-e-janaza which was held on the morning of July 27.

But a team from the upazila administration reached there an hour after the burial, ruffling the feathers of the freedom fighters in the upazila.

Jahir Uddin Mohammed Babar, the younger son of Ashraf Ali, said, "The time of the janaza was fixed at 11:00am, but an assistant commissioner (land) of Banskhalia upazila administration reached the spot at 12:00pm."

Several freedom fighters have alleged that Mostafizur Rahman, ruling party lawmaker from Chattogram-16,

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PRAYER TIMING SEPTEMBER 23

Fajr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
4:40	12:45	4:30	6:05	7:30

JAMAAAT 5:15 1:15 4:45 6:10 8:00

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION