

PM lays foundation of flyover in city Saturday

UNB, Dhaka

To ease traffic congestion in city's Khilgaon rail-road intersection, a flyover will be constructed at a cost of Tk 39.76 crore.

This will be the country's first flyover to be built under the government's own funding under the supervision of the Local Government Engineering Department (LGED).

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will lay the foundation of the flyover on Saturday and the project is expected to be completed within 20 months.

The 1662-metre-long and 15-metre-wide flyover will have four lanes and a divider in the middle.

It will also have 277-metre bridge-and-ramp on the Syedabad end, 293-metre on the Malibagh end and 384-metre on the Rajarbagh end.

Vehicles, coming from any of the three sides will be able to ply on the flyover without any traffic signal as it will have 708-metre-long loops on

both sides.

The flyover will be constructed on single pillars to facilitate movement of vehicles under it.

A local construction firm Development Construction Ltd and Chinese Wuhan General Municipal Engineering Corporation will jointly implement the project.

An agreement was signed here yesterday between the LGED and the two construction firms.

Executive Engineer of LGED Syed Mahbubur Rahman and Managing Director of Development Construction Ltd M Nurul Amin signed the agreement at the LGED conference room.

Local Government Minister Zillur Rahman, Commerce Minister M Abdul Jalil and Deputy Minister for LGRD Saber Hossain Chowdhury were present, among others, in the signing ceremony.

Upon completion of the project, road communication between the city's southeastern and western region will greatly improve, said an official handout.

Mamata: Rough road

FROM PAGE 1

enhance her credibility.

Indeed, a difficult road lies ahead of Mamata. Relations between her party and its new electoral ally Congress have already shown signs of strain following mutual recrimination over their failure to do well in West Bengal elections.

Only a couple of days ago, Congress Working Committee, the highest decision-making forum of Sonia Gandhi's party, attributed part of the blame for its debacle in the West Bengal poll to Mamata's whimsical decision to quit the NDA and her ambivalent stance to it even after that.

The Congress feels Mamata failed to adequately explain why she had quit NDA and refrained from attacking the BJP which put her credibility under cloud, especially among Muslim voters, sources said.

Besides, dissidence in Trinamool

Congress is brewing over her decision to quit the NDA. The dissident colour of Mamata's senior party colleague Ajit Kumar Panja is the brightest. There were reports of possible split in Trinamool following speculations that Panja and four fellow members of Lok Sabha might break ranks in return for berths in Vajpayee ministry.

Nevertheless, Vajpayee's declaration Monday that he is not going to expand his ministry could be good news to Mamata. BJP sources say reshuffle in the Vajpayee cabinet would have to wait till the prime minister's knee operation in June and his recovery from it for minimum two weeks. This will be followed by the high-profile visit to New Delhi by Pakistan's military ruler General Pervez Musharraf some time in early July. That gives Mamata more than a month's time to introspect and get her acts together.

Probe body

FROM PAGE 1

imported fabrics: NBR identifies 37 garment factories," the BGMEA said

it would have no objection if actions were taken against a factory for involvement in sales of imported fabrics under bond license to the local market.

The BGMEA further said that it was aware of the image of the readymade garment sector and never supported factories, which were involved with such a corrupt practice.

The Daily Star thanks the Ministry of Environment and Forest, and the Bangladesh Garments Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) for their prompt action. The Editor.

UP chairman shot

FROM PAGE 1

slightly injured, when Kabir hit him with a stick. The gang fled in motorbikes towards Uttara, officer-in-charge (OC) of Savar thana said

quoting the witnesses.

Asked whether any of the muggers could be arrested, the OC said they went to Uttara that is beyond his jurisdiction.

"We have already sent teams to several places to arrest the culprits" said the OC.

The critically injured Kabir was sent to the Shuhrawardy Hospital and later shifted to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital. The doctors said his condition is critical.

Kabir, who has been chairman of Ashulia Union Parishad for about 21 years, is a resident of Pargram at Ashulia.

When contacted, the duty officer at Savar police station said none came to file any case till last night.

Indo-Bangla border talks

FROM PAGE 1

Barring these, demarcation of the 4002 km borders between the two countries has been completed during the past two years.

"We are optimistic that the talks will yield positive results. We want to identify the mechanisms of demarcations but if it is not resolved, it will go to Foreign Secretary level," Ali said.

On the adverse possessions, he said, "We still have to work out the modalities of exchange of adverse possessions which at some points have been changed because of changes in the course of rivers."

On the recent clashes between Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) and Indian Border Security Force (BSF) at Barabari leaving 19 troops killed in two sides, 16 of them from BSF, the foreign secretary said investiga-

tions on how BSF intruded into Bangladesh are still going on. The Indian side has also undertaken investigation and its outcome is being awaited, he told a questioner.

Asked if Bangladesh is going to raise the issue of compensation because of the BSF attack at Barabari at the meeting in New Delhi, Ali said the issues will be taken up at separate meetings between the two countries.

"I will meet Indian Foreign Secretary Ms Chokila Ayer in Colombo next month taking up the entire gamut of bilateral relations between the two countries and invite her to the next Foreign Secretary level in Dhaka", he said referring to the June 8-9 meeting of SAARC standing committee in the Sri Lankan capital.

A tale of Mirpur

FROM PAGE 1

several times with no results.

Rather, they alleged, the commissioner refused to do any development work in Senpara Parbata because he thinks people of that area did not vote for him during the election.

When contacted Abdul Kader refuted the allegation saying that a special project worth nearly Tk 62 lakh under the Dhaka Urban Transport Project (DUTP) has been taken up for the main roads around Senpara Parbata.

"The area under Ward No 14 is one of the largest in Dhaka. I believe, since I was elected in 1994, the volume of development work in my ward has been higher than any other in the city despite allocation of a limited budget," he claimed.

In its last budget the DCC allotted Tk 40 lakh for this ward.

There are no footbridges at two of the busiest places at Mirpur - the circle at Section 10 and the crossing at Section 1. However, the DUTP

has recently started constructing two footbridges at these two points.

Indiscriminate parking of buses, trucks, etc at Pallabi makes movement of other vehicles difficult on the road leading towards the Mirpur Cantonment.

Parked automobiles also occupy sizeable portion of the roads near Section 10 circle, Section 1 crossing and Muktijoddoh Supermarket. These roads have recently been developed and widened under the DUTP.

In the afternoon, waste containers of DCC occupy half of the Mazar Road and the passers-by are exposed to unbearable stench. Besides, solid waste is carelessly dumped at Barabagh, Shewrapara, Kazipara, Senpara and Block C of Section 10.

Almost half the Mazar road remains occupied by rickshaws, tempos, auto rickshaws, mini buses and street vendors throughout the day.

Hockey stick procession against toll collection

UNB, Kushtia

Exasperated with the rising toll collection, the businessmen here in town brought out a hockey stick procession on Tuesday issuing warning to terrorists and extortionists.

United Businessmen Welfare Association organised the stick procession to mark the first founding anniversary of the association.

Each of the members of the business community with a hockey stick in hand and a whistle in the mouth attended the procession spontaneously.

Parading different thoroughfares of the town, the agitating businessmen later held a rally at Rajab Ali market in the town demanding immediate arrest of the terrorists.

Upon completion of the project, road communication between the city's southeastern and western region will greatly improve, said an official handout.



PHOTO: AP

Lakhpri Dhiki, the proud mother (L) of the world's youngest conqueror to the summit of Mount Everest, schoolboy Temba Tsheri, 16 (R), embraces him on his return to Kathmandu yesterday. Temba Tsheri conquered the 8848 metre high Mount Everest, the world's tallest mountain, from the Tibet side on May 22. Earlier in the spring of 2000, he failed in an attempt to climb Everest from the Nepal side due to frost bite and lost his five fingers on both hands as a result.

Tributes paid to Zia

FROM PAGE 1

nations of the world and helped it develop relations with all countries.

Zia played a key-role in regional and global peace process. The South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) is the brain-child of the late president.

On this day in 1981, Ziaur Rahman, the proclaimer of Bangladesh's independence, was assassinated at Chittagong Circuit House by a group of disgruntled army men.

To mark the day, BNP and its different front organisations brought out a procession in the port city protesting the attack on party men at Mariannagar and the killing of JCD activist Shahidul Alam Nitol.

Nitol was gunned down on the road in front of the residence of Salahuddin Quader Chowdhury at about 4:30 pm on Tuesday.

Earlier, the Chief of Naval Staff was present in Seoul during the launch of the ship which will pave the way for the Daewoo's entry into the global warship export market.

Daewoo won the bidding to build the frigate for the Bangladesh navy in 1997. The government of Bangladesh will pay for the ship from its revenue income.

A delegation of eight members of parliament also visited South Korea to see the making of the ship that has a maximum speed of 25.2 knots with a full load of 2320 tons.

Daewoo is one of South Korea's leading arms manufacturers. It has built a 3,800-ton destroyer and diesel-powered submarines for the South Korean Navy. South Korea's Hyundai Heavy Industries Company also sold a naval patrol ship to Bangladesh in 1995.

Former President Abdur Rahman Biswas placed wreath and

offered fateha at the mazaar of Zia at 10:15am.

BNP Chairperson and Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Khaleda Zia along with party leaders and activists placed wreath at 10:30am. Top BNP leaders AQM Badruddoza Chowdhury, Md Saifur Rahman, Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, Khandaker Delwar Hossain, Khandaker Moshraraf Hossain, Abdul Matin Chowdhury, Moudud Ahmed, Khandaker Mahbubuddin Ahmed, Md Shawkat Ali, Sadeque Hossain Khoka and others were present.

Afterwards, BNP's different front organisations including Jubat Dal, Sramik Dal, Chhatra Dal, Mohila Dal, Krishak Dal, Jasas, Shechhasabak Dal, Tanti Dal and Ulema Dal also placed wreaths at the mazaar.

After the mazaar programme, Khaleda Zia along with senior party leaders distributed food among the poor and destitute at some 50 places in Agargaon BNP Bazaar, Dhanmondi, Ramna, Motijheel, Tejgaon and Cantonment thana

areas.

BNP has taken up a 4-day destination feeding programme beginning yesterday in some 400 places in the capital city.

It also arranged for special prayers and milad mahfil at 28 mosques in the city including Baitul Mukarram after Asr prayers.

Jasas, BNP's cultural wing, put up a huge gate at Naya Paltan road and decorated the entire road with miniature black flags, festoons and posters. It organised a film show on the life and works of Zia in front of party central office in the evening.

Earlier, many children under the banner of Zia Shishu Smriti Free Clinic began a daylong hunger strike in front of BNP central office demanding May 30 to be declared a National Mourning Day and a public holiday.

The children broke their fast at about 2:30pm at Khaleda Zia's request by taking sherbet from her hands.

Construction of Rupsha Bridge

FROM PAGE 1

fulfilling the long-cherished dream of the people of the southwestern region.

"The Rupsha Bridge project is yet another addition to the success story of the Awami League government," said Hasina amidst cheers and applause.

The prime minister said her government has not laid the foundation stone of or started any project without completing appropriate process and allocating necessary fund.

She also said that her government discussed the Rupsha Bridge project with the government of Japan and asked for funding. Accordingly, a credit agreement was signed on March 29 this year with the Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC) to finance the project. The land acquisition formalities began after the agreement, she informed.

She said that her government will do everything to complete construction of the bridge within the stipulated time.

Hasina said the Japanese construction firm Shimizu-ITD joint venture has been appointed for the construction of the bridge.

"We have ensured longevity and effectiveness of the bridge over the mighty river Rupsha through application of developed and modern technology," said the prime minister.

She said through this bridge, Bagerhat and other southwestern districts will be brought under smooth road communication network.

Terming the development of communication system as one of the pre-requisite to the country's overall development, the prime minister reiterated her election pledge for massive, well-coordinated programmes to develop the communication system.

She said her government has spent about Tk 6,330 crore during the last four years and eleven months for development and maintenance of road network under the RHD.

For 2000-2001 fiscal, Tk 1,743 crore has further been allocated for development and Tk 290 crore for maintenance.

"We have achieved economic growth of about six per cent over the last four years and recently we attained food surpluses with a surplus of 1.58 million metric tons of foodgrains."

Earlier, the prime minister was

given standing ovation when she reached Labonchora at 11:15 am. Hundreds of men and women greeted her with applause and slogans, standing on either side of the one-way road under a scorching sun. She offered prayers after laying the foundation stone of the bridge and inaugurating the ground-breaking work.

Communications Minister Anwar Hossain, Health Minister Sheikh Fazlul Karim Selim, State Minister for Social Welfare Dr. Mozammel Hossain, State Minister for Planning Dr. Mohiuddin Khan Alamgir, State Minister for Energy Prof. Rafiqul Islam, State Minister for Communications Anisul Huq Chowdhury, State Minister for Health Dr. Amanullah, State Minister for Disaster Management and Relief Talukder Abdul Khaleque, Secretary to the Ministry of Communications Rezaul Hayat, Ambassador of Japan to Bangladesh Jiro Kobayashi, Whip Mustafa Rashid Suja, Sheikh Helaluddin MP and Munnujan Sufian MP were present at the meeting, among others.

Members of the scouts said they have 1.3 million scouts across the country and that they are ready to post some of them at different city points to reduce traffic woes.

Editor of The Daily Star Mahfuz Anam chaired the meeting.

They observed that a concerted

Spl security to Hasina

FROM PAGE 12

series of hartals, BNP has already sought presidential intervention in stopping the government from going ahead with the planned law. A high-powered delegation of the party on Monday also urged him not to give his assent to the matter. The ruling Awami League, too, plans to discuss the matter with the president soon.

Observers say the moves by the opposing political camps are aimed at involving the Bangabhaban in the pre-election politics.

Meanwhile, the government is yet to divulge details of the proposed law though it has given rise to widespread controversy. Top government leaders including the prime minister are only defending the legal steps without focusing much on its provisions.

An influential minister said the government is determined to pass the law to ensure security to Sheikh Hasina who has survived a number of assassination attempts.

The minister, who would not be named, claimed that press reports did not speak of the basic nature of the planned law which is aimed