

PADMA BRIDGE

Construction work to begin during alliance govt tenure

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Communications Minister Nazmul Huda has said work on the construction of Padma bridge will begin during the tenure of the alliance government.

He said donor agencies including World Bank, Asian Development Bank and Government of Japan have already shown keen interest in financing the massive project costing over \$1.2 billion.

The minister was speaking at a briefing on the progress of feasibility study on the proposed bridge at his office yesterday.

Over six kilometer-long bridge, to be constructed at Mawa-Janjira point, will be the longest one in the country.

Huda said extensive river training programme will be taken before the construction of the bridge to stop the erosion of river banks.

He ruled out the possibility of imposing surcharge for fund mobilising for the bridge saying that such steps would not be required as the donors have already responded positively.

The minister said the double-lane bridge will also carry all other utility service lines including gas, electricity and telephone.

The government is also thinking of setting up rail line over the bridge. In that case, total project cost will be increased by 13 percent, he added.

Earlier, the leader of 27-member

study team of Japan International Cooperation Agency Minoru Shibuya presented the progress report on the feasibility study.

The team will submit its final report in March next year.

At the briefing, three designs of the bridge were also placed.

CPA dismantles 2 huge billboards

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Chittagong

The Chittagong Port Authority dismantled two unauthorised huge billboards at the VIP Road along the bank of river Karnaphuli during a drive on Sunday.

The billboards 40 feet in height and weighing around six or seven ton each were erected illegally on the land of Chittagong Port Authority (CPA) and have long been posing a threat to the port security and a danger to the flights during their take-off and landing at Shah Amanat International Airport, said CPA Magistrate Md Munir Chowdhury, who conducted the drive.

He said both the billboards belonged to KDS Group of Industries, a leading garment manufacturers and exporters.

It took several hours to dismantle the billboards, sources said.



PHOTO: STAR

Students of Chittagong University of Engineering and Technology (CUET) form a human chain on the Central Shaheed Minar premises yesterday demanding immediate reopening of the university.

Reopening of Cuet demanded

CU CORRESPONDENT

Students of Chittagong University of Engineering and Technology (CUET) formed a human chain on the Central Shaheed Minar premises yesterday demanding immediate reopening of the university.

A brief rally followed the human chain.

Speakers at the rally demanded immediate resumption of classes and examination and restoration of congenial academic atmosphere on the campus.

The Cuet authorities on Sunday closed down the university till October 10 following ransacking of around 50 rooms of three residential halls.

General students ransacked the rooms protesting assault on three students allegedly by the Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) cadres.

Meanwhile, the Cuet authorities constituted a four-member committee headed by Professor Md Tazul Islam of Computer Science to investigate the incident. The probe committee has been asked to submit its report by October 7.

SANITATION FOR ALL BY 2010 Tk 267 cr project under consideration

BSS, Dhaka

State Minister for LGRD and Cooperatives Ziaul Huq Zia yesterday said that the union parishads and "Gram Sarkar" would be given more assistance for completing the sanitation programme by 2010.

"In future, each Gram Sarkar will be given Tk 10,000 for implementation of sanitation programme in the grassroots," he said this while he was speaking at a workshop at Public Health Engineering Department (DPHE) auditorium here as the chief guest.

Secretary of the Local Government Division AHM Abul Kashem, Joint Secretary Mokhlesur

Rahman, Chief Engineer of DPHE Mohammad Khorshed Alam and former secretary AYBI Siddique also addressed the function with Dhaka Divisional Commissioner Mia Mushtaq Ahmed in the chair.

He said a Tk 267 crore project is now under active consideration of the government for providing sanitary latrine materials for the hard-core poor free of cost and taking minimum cost from the well off persons.

He said a special budget would be allocated with government recognition to the union parishads and the "grams sarkar" to achieve 100 per cent target in implementing the sanitation programme.

JU students continue to boycott exams, classes

JU CORRESPONDENT

Students of computer science and engineering department of Jahangirnagar University (JU) continued to boycott their classes and examinations for the third consecutive day yesterday demanding immediate cancellation of the appointment of a teacher in their department.

The department wore a deserted look as no-one turned up to attend the classes and only six out of 15 teachers were present. Scheduled examinations were also not held.

All classrooms and most of the office rooms were under lock and key.

The honours final year examinations of 1998-99, which was scheduled to begin on September 25, remained withheld for an indefinite period in the wake of the move-

ment. Meanwhile, a large number of students of the department have left their dormitories in the face of threat by Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) cadres.

"We cannot stay in our dormitories as the JCD cadres have threatened us with dire consequences saying they were given the responsibility to stop the movement," said a student preferring anonymity.

The students have been agitating since last Saturday as the university authorities recruited Sayed Mohaimeen Khaled Mahmud, a former student of North South University, as a lecturer to their department.

"If the appointment is not cancelled, it might introduce a bad tradition of appointing private university students in public universities," said a teacher of the department asking not to be named.



PHOTO: STAR

Left Democratic Front (LDF) stages a demonstration at Muktagang yesterday demanding steps to reduce prices of essentials and supply of fertiliser and seeds to the farmers.

11th IPU confce begins in Geneva today

UNB, Dhaka

A parliamentary delegation led by Deputy Speaker Akhtar Hamid Siddiqui left here yesterday to attend the 11th Inter Parliamentary Union Conference in Geneva yesterday.

The four-day conference begins today. After the conference the delegation will also attend a seminar on "Implementing the convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against women: The Role of Parliamentarians" on October 2.

Other members of the delegation are Whip Rezaul Bari Dina, Whip Alhaj M Zahed Ali, Begum Rawshan Ershad, Dr Mohammad Rustam Ali Farazi, M Hafiz Ibrahim, M Ali Asgar (Loby), Mia Golam Parwar and secretary of the Parliament Secretariat Khandakar Fazlur Rahman.

'Stop activities of mini-engineering cells'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Employees of Housing and Public Works Ministry yesterday called on the government to take necessary steps to stop activities of mini-engineering cells created in different ministries for construction and maintenance work.

They said creation of such cells was narrowing down the scope of work for the Public Works

Department (PWD), leaving the future of 15,000 employees uncertain.

The PWD is responsible for all construction, repairing and maintenance work under different ministries and directorates except railway, telephone and telegraph (T&T) and postal department, said leaders of Bangladesh Public Works Employees Union at a press conference in the city.

But different ministries and directorates have been creating engineering cells or 'mini PWDs' in violation of the rules of business and allocation of business, said union President Abdul Mannan.

He also alleged that some quarters were engaged in creating 'mini PWDs' only to misappropriate money.