

JATRABARI FLYOVER

Design, guarantee get knock from experts

TAWFIQUE ALI

As efforts are afoot to revive the controversial Jatrabari flyover project, experts say two major issues the design and an unprecedented blanket guarantee -- remain unresolved.

The flyover will have long pillars going into the ground, and the proposed metro rail a subway system connecting Tongi in the north with Narayanganj in the south is supposed to go through the same area.

The pillars will obstruct the metro rail for which tunnels will have to be dug deeper to bypass the pillars. This will substantially increase the cost of the metro system, experts say.

At the same time, the proposed elevated expressway is also supposed to run through the flyover zone. This would require the expressway to be built higher at a higher cost as well.

Moreover, 10 ramps of the flyover to be built with an

area of only one kilometre between Jatrabari and Syedabad would narrow the existing roads, reducing their capacity, experts claimed.

The toll collection plazas for users of the flyover would be built on the existing surface roads. This will lead to a huge congestion on the existing roads, experts said.

At the same time, a special guarantee given to the company building the controversial Jatrabari flyover conflict with other government plans to make traffic flow quicker in the same corridor, experts say.

The Dhaka City Corporation (DCC), the implementing authority of the flyover, promised that the government would not build any new road or open transport service that would compete with the flyover, the first flyover that will be charging toll. It also pledged not to change any existing roads, which might restrict traffic and earn lower revenues for the company.

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This image shows the overall layout of the flyover from Chittagong Road end.



Death at the dentist

Woman dies soon after doctor pulls out her tooth

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Halima Khatun, who went to BSMU yesterday to get her ailing tooth cured, was brought home dead.

Halima, 45, was suffering from severe toothache and gum swelling. She went to Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BSMMU) from Postogola in the capital around 11:00am.

Soon after the medical

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facebook blocked

Ban follows arrest of man over 'cartoon' of Hasina, Khaleda; members of popular social network angrily react to govt decision

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Regulators yesterday "temporarily" blocked access to Facebook, a popular social networking site.

The decision came after the arrest of a youth for uploading satiric images of some politicians, including the prime minister and the leader of the opposition.

The government did not make any official statement yet, but sources in Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (BTRC) said part of the reason is the posting of

some anti-religious and porn links by users across the globe.

"We have blocked all access to Facebook temporarily," said a high official of BTRC. "It was done in line with a decision of government high-ups."

In a late-night development, a group of Dhaka University students took to the streets to protest the government's decision.

In instant reactions to The Daily Star yesterday evening, IT experts criticised the government for the move.

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Resentment over Jamaat presence at EC meet

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Law Minister Shafique Ahmed and some leaders of left-leaning parties expressed displeasure over the presence of Jamaat-e-Islami leaders at a meeting organised by the Election Commission yesterday.

The law minister, who was invited to the meeting as chief guest, was unwilling to join it after knowing about the Jamaat leaders' presence at the meeting.

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Bangladesh, not WB, to handle climate fund

Asian conference of global alliance begins today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh will now control around Tk 12 crore climate fund, which development partners wanted to be managed by the World Bank. The country gets rid of the condition following a successful negotiation with the donors.

"The declaration in this regard will come soon," Dr Hasan Mahmud, state minister for forest and environment, said at a news briefing at the ministry yesterday.

The briefing was organised ahead of two-day Asian Conference of Global Climate Change Alliance (GCCA) that begins in Dhaka today.

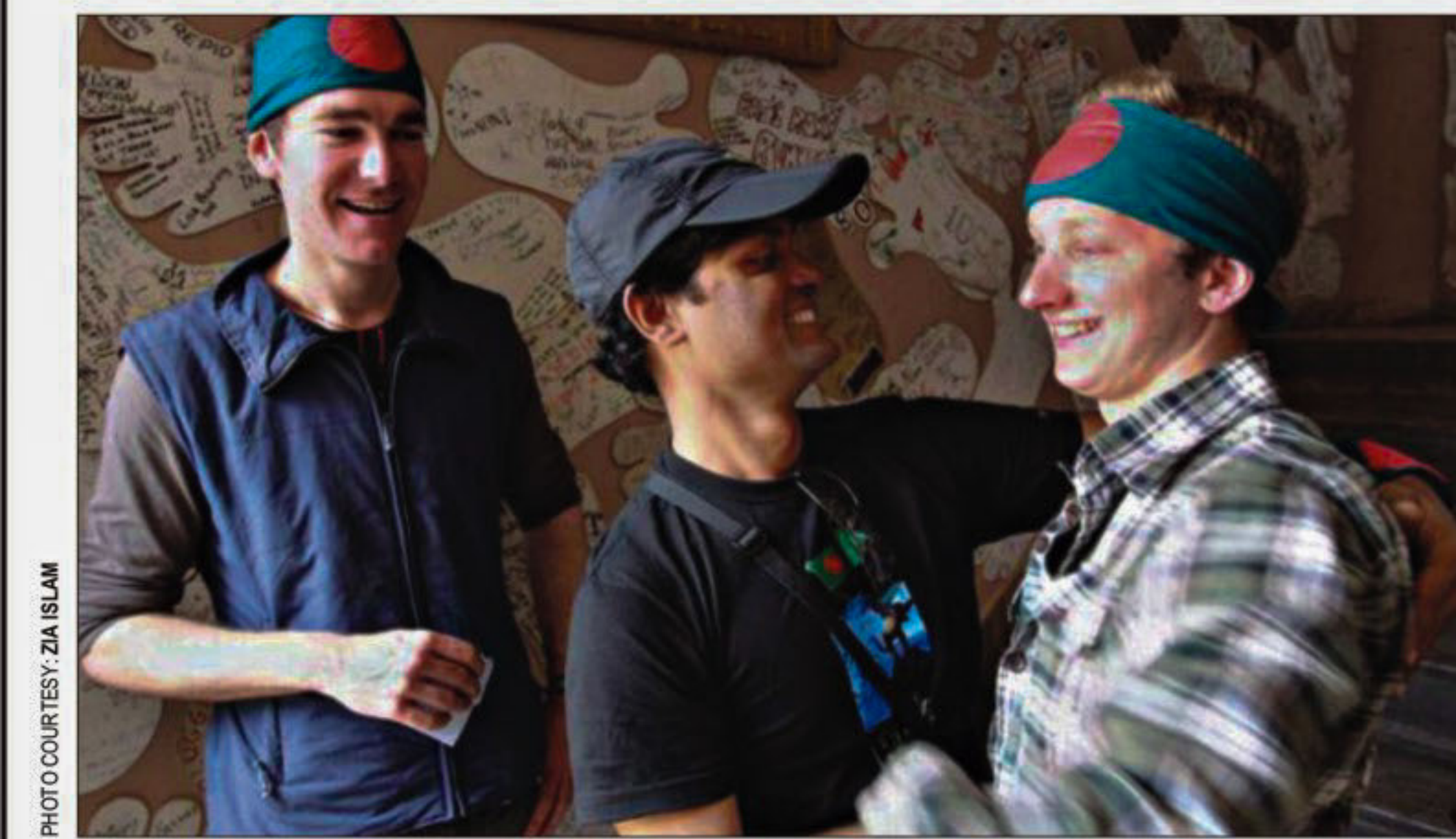
"The fund is yet to be operational, as its modalities could not be fixed," Hasan Mahmud said. The country entered into serious negotiations to establish authority over the fund.

However, the WB will provide Bangladesh with technical assistance for the time being, he said.

The Multi Donor Trust Fund was formed in London in 2008 to collect and disburse money for climate change adaptation in Bangladesh.

It will be called Bangladesh Climate Change Resilient Fund (BCCRF) following the official declaration.

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Musa embraces Stephan Green while Brendan Ma'money looks on at the Rum Doodle restaurant in Kathmandu yesterday. "If the two were not there (up on the mountain) I am not sure what would have happened to me," Musa said.

Bangladeshis in Kathmandu hail hero

PINAKI ROY from Kathmandu

On the International Everest Day yesterday, the Bangladeshi community in Kathmandu gave a rapturous reception to Musa Ibrahim, the nation's first Everest summiteer.

Bangladesh Embassy arranged the function at Hotel Everest, where Bangladesh expatriates in Nepal gathered

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Hands of Australian saved Musa's life

PINAKI ROY from Kathmandu

Holding his arm, Musa came to the Bangladeshi folks to introduce a tall Australian mountaineer.

"This is Brendan Ma'money. He had saved my life," Musa said to the Bangladeshis gathered at the Rum Doodle Restaurant in Kathmandu to celebrate the International Everest Day.

"No, I did not do anything. If I were not there, somebody else would do that,"

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replied Brendan who also conquered the Everest on the same day Musa did.

Brendan, Musa and three Sherpas then described how Musa's life was saved on the day of conquering the Everest.

Musa Ibrahim, the first ever Everest conqueror from Bangladesh, said it was 8,600 metres high where his oxygen cylinder got leaked crushing with a rock while coming down from the Everest.

TORCHING OF ALEYA Another held

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police early yesterday arrested an accomplice of Aleya's unwelcome suitor Khokon who led Wednesday's grisly attack on her in city's Pallabi.

Following the arrest of Billal Hossain, some people went to the burn unit of Dhaka Medical College Hospital where Aleya was undergoing treatment around 3:30 pm and threatened her aunt Razia Begum not to implicate Billal in this case.

Billal was arrested in front of his Godaraghat residence in the city's Shahali. Three men including

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Nepal steps back from the brink

MPs agree to extend tenure of parliament by a year; PM to resign 'without delay'

SYED ZAIN AL-MAHMOOD

Nepal's political leaders struck a last-minute deal Friday night to extend the tenure of the Constituent Assembly by a year, averting a constitutional crisis that had threatened to derail the Himalayan nation's fragile democracy.

The 601-member Constituent Assembly (CA), which doubles as the parliament, was elected in May 2008 with the task of writing a new constitution and concluding a four-year-old peace process that brought Maoist rebels

into the political mainstream. That mandate was set to expire at midnight on Friday, after which the Assembly along with the interim constitution would cease to exist.

Faced with a looming deadline and possible chaos, the three major political parties -- United Communist Party of Nepal (UCPN-Maoist), Nepali Congress (NC) and Communist Party of Nepal (Marxist-Leninist) -- reached a broad agreement to extend the tenure of the CA, under which Prime Minister Madhav Kumar Nepal would resign "without delay" to

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