

CROSS-BORDER RAIL LINK
Tk 80cr project
may be placed
at Ecne today

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Bangladesh and India are going to re-open another rail link between Chilahati in Nilphamari and Haldibari in Siliguri to boost sub-regional trade and tourism.

A Tk 80 crore project may be placed at the Ecne meeting today for setting up 7 kilometre broad-gauge rail track in Bangladesh part. Delhi will set up 4km rail line from Haldibari to India-Bangladesh border.

According to the proposal, once the project is complete, a network will be established to facilitate import and export activities of India's north-east, Nepal and Bhutan through Mongla port in Bangladesh.

Passengers and goods could also be transported between India and Bangladesh through the rail line.

A railway ministry official said at the India-Bangladesh inter-government meeting in 2015 the decision to set up

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Workers install razor wire on the railing of a bridge at Hatirjheel in Dhaka recently. The authorities concerned took the initiative to prevent visitors from sitting on the railings, inset, and ensure their safety.

PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ

SC upholds first-class division for Shahidul

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court (SC) yesterday upheld a High Court (HC) order asking government to provide first-class division facilities in jail to internationally-acclaimed photographer Shahidul Alam.

Appellate Division's chamber judge Justice M Imman Ali dropped the government stay petition against the HC order from its hearing list and asked to move a leave-to-appeal petition before the court.

"The previous HC order on September 5 that granted first-class division facilities in jail for Shahidul will now remain in force," his lawyer Barrister Jyotirmoy Barua said.

Attorney General Mahbubey Alam appeared for the government, while Barrister Sara Hossain stood for Shahidul.

On September 5, HC bench of Justice Borhanuddin and Justice Md Mostafizur Rahman passed the order following a writ petition filed by Shahidul's wife Prof Rahnuma Ahmed.

The 63-year-old photographer is now in Dhaka central jail in a case filed under the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Act for "spreading propaganda and false information against the government."

Shahidul was picked up by law enforcers from his home in the capital's Dhanmondi area on the night of August 5. The following day, police filed the case against him.

He was placed on a seven-day remand and was sent to jail on August 13.

'Give us till December 31 to update documents'

Transport owners urge govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka Road Transport Owners Association (DRTOA) yesterday requested the government to give them time until December 31 to update their vehicles' documents.

"If owners fail to update their documents within December 31, action can be taken [against owners]. Like [the offer given regarding] driving licence, we are requesting to give us time till December 31 to update documents," Khondaker Enayet Ullah, general secretary of DRTOA, said.

He was speaking at the special general meeting of DRTOA at Mohanagar Natya Mancha in the capital's Gulistan. The meeting was held to discuss how public transport can be operated in the city in a more disciplined way.

Enayet made the request after around a dozen bus owners told the meeting that they were facing problems as law enforcers are being strict about checking documents, following the student protests for safe roads.

Following the request of transport owners and workers, last month the government allowed until December 31 to meet the requirement of experience for licence to drive

medium and heavy vehicles.

A person having a professional driving licence for light vehicles and one year of experience can now drive medium-sized vehicles. Similarly, a person having a professional driving licence for medium-sized vehicles can operate heavy vehicles until December 31, as per the gazette issued by the Road Transport and Bridges Ministry on August 16.

Enayet said the number of bus owners wanting to update their documents exceeds the capacity of the two offices of Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA), which provide fitness and other clearance.

"I want to make the request to the road transport and bridges ministry through the media," he said, amidst applause from transport owners.

Enayet said they have held meetings with transport owners separately, sent letters to them and even formed four vigilance teams to bring discipline in the transport sector in Dhaka city.

"As we didn't get expected response, we have convened today's special general meeting," he said, adding, "All of you [owners]

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JS body submits report on road transport bill

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A parliamentary committee yesterday placed its report to the parliament on the much-talked about Road Transport Bill, recommending some changes in the proposed law.

It, however, did not address criticisms against the act, including the "lenient" nature of punishment over deaths caused by reckless driving.

Scrutinising the bill, the standing committee on road transport and bridges ministry at a meeting on Saturday decided to recommend changes to sections 25(2), 43(4) and 54 of the proposed law.

Akabbar Hossain, chief of the JS body, yesterday placed the report before the house.

The proposed law is likely to pass in the current session of parliament scheduled to continue till September 20, sources at the parliament secretariat told The Daily Star.

On Thursday, Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader placed the bill in parliament, which then sent it to the parliamentary standing committee for scrutiny. The House body was asked to submit its report within a week.

PROPOSED CHANGES

Section 54 deals with formation of a trustee board to manage funds for the injured in road accidents, or family

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Road crashes kill two in capital

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two people were killed and one injured in road accidents in Dhaka in the last two days.

Yesterday afternoon, a motorbike ridesharing passenger was killed and the biker was injured after a bus hit the bike from behind near Khilkhet on Airport Road, a duty officer of Khilkhet Police Station said.

Police seized the bus of Snigdha Paribahan and the bike from the spot. The biker was identified as Sabbir, 34, but the passenger's identity could not be known.

Locals rushed them to Kurmitola General Hospital. They were shifted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital, where doctors declared the passenger dead, said Bacchu Miah, sub-inspector of DMCH police outpost.

Meanwhile an auto-rickshaw driver was killed when a bus hit his

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