

Govt working to improve people's living standard: PM

Says completion of metro rail will ease capital residents' suffering

AGENCIES, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said the aim of her government is to improve the living standards of people and free the country from poverty.

"We're taking Bangladesh to the trajectory of development through reducing poverty... We have always had one goal - to develop people's lifestyle, free them from poverty and make the country economically self-reliant," she said after opening the second Meghna and second Gomti bridges on Dhaka-Chittagong highway through a videoconference from her official residence Gono Bhaban.

The newly-constructed bridges, she said, will be very helpful for the socioeconomic development of the country, reports UNB.

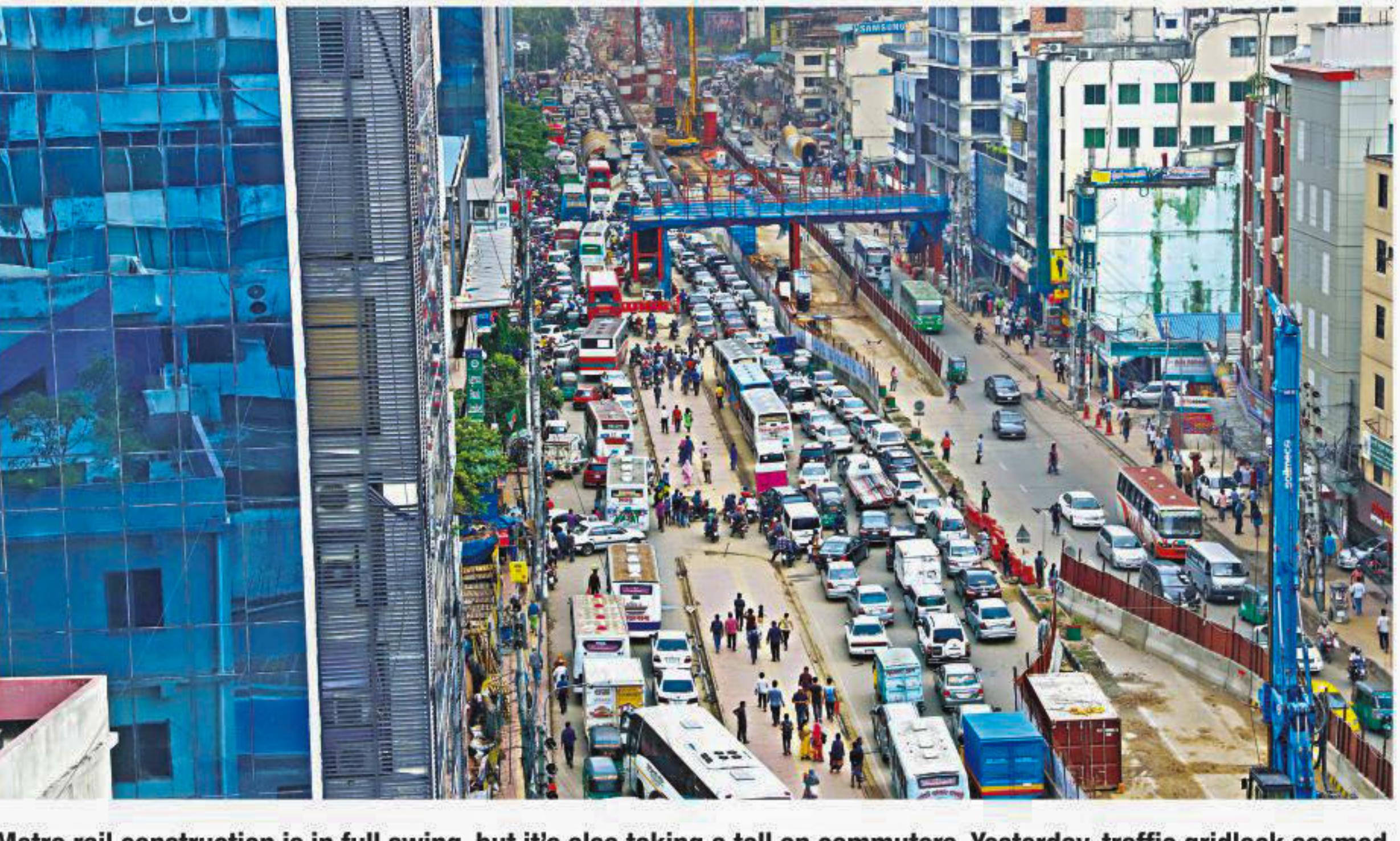
Hasina said the government is developing roads, rail routes, waterways and air communications, and the people of the country are getting the benefits of the government's various programmes.

Talking about the construction of Metro Rail to ease the sufferings of people living in Dhaka, the prime minister said once the work is completed, there will be no more sufferings.

She said there will be 16 stations for Metro Rail and it will be possible to carry 60,000 passengers per hour.

Hasina said, the government is getting cooperation from friendly nations, development partners and above all the cooperation of the country's people for

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2



Metro rail construction is in full swing, but it's also taking a toll on commuters. Yesterday, traffic gridlock seemed to go on as far as one's eyes can see on Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue.

PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ

Newborn found dead

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A newborn girl was found dead in Mirpur yesterday, after reportedly being thrown from the fourth floor of a building.

Witnesses said the baby died on the spot, after being thrown through the ventilator of a washroom of that building on road-10 in Rupnagar residential area, around 11:30am.

Police recovered the body and handed it over to Shaheed Suhrawardy Medical College morgue for autopsy, said Sheikh Mohammad Shah Alam, OC of Rupnagar Police Station.

Development process lacks vision

Experts tell discussion on Dhaka's liveability

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka continues to suffer from the stigma of being unliveable, because whatever development it experiences is monocentric and uncoordinated, said urban and transport experts yesterday.

Unless population density of around 42,000 people per square kilometre is dispersed with decentralised development in other cities, the capital can never regain its liveability, they said.

"But sadly, there is no vision in the development process to build Dhaka as a liveable city," said Adil Mohammed Khan, general secretary of Bangladesh Institute of Planners.

Development projects are being undertaken in isolation, disjointed from one another, said Khan while

delivering a keynote at the discussion on "How liveable is Dhaka", organised by Nagar Unnyan Sangbadik Forum (NUSF) at Jatiya Press Club.

Development projects will soon prove either counter-productive or futile if not decentralised, he said, adding that 36 percent of 9,556-acre

conservable flood flow zones, water retention areas and wetlands have been filled up over the past decade.

Traffic congestion, lack of coordination, water congestion, filling up wetlands and flood flow zones, mass migration to Dhaka city, scarce civic amenities, water, noise and air pollution, scarcity of safe drinking water and unhealthy housing are some of the challenges Dhaka's development is faced with, he said.

"No sustainable urbanisation is possible without managing population density," said Md Sirajul Islam, chief town planner of Dhaka South City Corporation.

Dr SM Saleh Uddin, technical expert of the 10-member committee for bus route rationalisation in Dhaka, said the government ignored the first priority of pedestrian facility provided in Dhaka's Strategic Transport Plan and undertook priority of building flyovers and metro rail.

Almost none of such development schemes like Bus Rapid Transit is compliant with deadline, giving rise to enormous cost escalation, he said.

DNCC Mayor Atiqul Islam also spoke at the event, chaired by NUSF President Amitosh Pal.

Universities' allocations not need-based: experts

DU CORRESPONDENT

Budgetary allocations at the universities are being given in a conventional lump-sum way without considering the needs of the institutions, and the allocation is not enough to continue improving quality of the universities, two economists said yesterday.

Former governor of Bangladesh Bank, Atiur Rahman and Professor M Abu Yusuf, director of Dhaka University's Centre for Budget and Policy, made the observation in a keynote paper at a programme on DU campus.

The seminar, titled "Budget for tertiary education to attain sustainable development goals", was organised by the Centre on Budget and Policy and the

'Stay alert of middlemen'

Speakers tell aspiring migrant workers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a discussion yesterday called upon prospective overseas workers to remain alert from middlemen to avoid being cheated and to ensure safe labour migration.

Parliamentarians' Caucus on Migration and Development organised the programme, titled "Migration budget for fairer labour migration", at the parliament members' club.

At least 39 Bangladeshis died on May 9, as a migrant boat sank in the Mediterranean Sea with

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2

Reading Club Trust at Muzaffar Ahmed Chowdhury auditorium.

"Budget in higher education sector should be given importance; budgetary allocation and infrastructural investment in research sector will have to be increased. At the same time, we have to take sustainable steps to ensure quality," says the keynote paper.

Unemployment rates among the highly educated people of the country are higher, the two experts observed.

They also blamed corruption, lack of skilled manpower, and weak management in implementation of the budget, and said the budget plan should be formulated and implemented in coordination with institutional and political accountability.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

PHOTO OF THE DAY

RASHED SHUMON



The engine of a launch being examined at Sadarghat in Dhaka as part of preparations for Eid trips. The engine, however, is emitting thick black smoke, suggesting that it is not in a good state. Waterway accidents are common on the occasions of Eid as many unfit vessels operate during the time. The photo was taken recently.

More women participation in ICT stressed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Lack of security and discrimination are the major reasons for which women are lagging behind in ICT professions in the country, speakers said at a dialogue yesterday.

Non-cooperation and rigid mentality of male counterparts and social barriers are some of the other reasons, they added.

Bangladesh Computer Samity (BCS) and Bangladesh Open Source Network (BdOSN) organised the event at BCS Innovation Centre in Dhanmondi.

Citing recent government statistics, BCS President Shahid-ul-Munir said about 25 percent of ICT students are female, but only 12 percent employees in the industry are women.

"It is unfortunate and a matter of concern," said Shahid, adding that women's dropout rates from jobs are also high.

Speaking as chief guest, Science and Technology Minister Yeafesh Osman said, "We cannot achieve desirable progress by keeping half of our population in the dark. We need more skilled women in the ICT sector."

Deputy Minister for Education Mohibul Hassan Chowdhury said the government is planning to modify curriculum at school level so male students learn to show more respect to their female peers.

Janata Bank Chair Luna Shamsuddoha and BdOSN general secretary Munir Hasan spoke at the event among others.

PADDY PROCUREMENT

BNP demands Tk 10,000cr more in budget allocation

UNB, Dhaka

Stating that farmers are being deprived of fair prices of their produce due to the government's wrong policy and corruption, BNP yesterday demanded an additional allocation of Tk 10,000 crore in the national budget for paddy procurement from farmers.

Speaking at a press conference at BNP's Nayapaltan central office, party Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir said farmers are losing interest in producing crops being deprived of fair prices, and warned that its consequences will be dire.

"The misery that farmers face now reflects the wrong policy of the government. Bangladesh's agriculture is now on the brink of ruination due to the government's corruption and lack of farsightedness," he said.

The BNP leader termed the farmers' demand for procuring paddy directly from them very simple and justified. "We agree with the logical demands of farmers. The government must make an additional allocation of Tk 10,000 crore for procuring paddy from farmers."

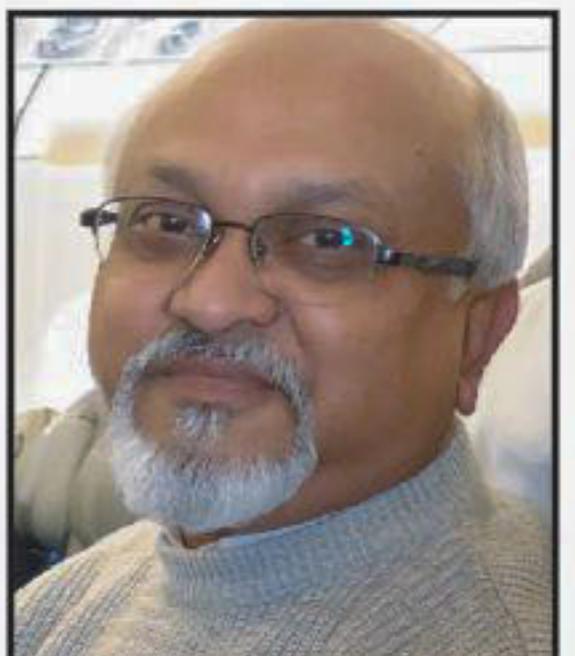
Fakhrul said though the government claims that the country has achieved self-sufficiency in producing rice, it imported a huge amount of rice only for ensuring benefits of ruling party people.

He said 69 lakh tonnes of rice were imported through government and private channels in the 2017-2018 fiscal.

Besides, the BNP leader said, 3.3 lakh tonnes of rice were imported over the last 10 months while 97,000 more

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

In fond remembrance of Dr. Mirza M Huq



Sadly missed, always remembered



Dr Kamal seeks 'pure, functional democracy'

UNB, Dhaka

Jatiya Oikyafront Convener Dr Kamal Hossain yesterday urged democratic forces to get united for establishing "pure and functional democracy" in the country.

"As per the constitution, the country is supposed to be ruled by those elected public representatives who will get majority through a free and fair election. We want the country to be governed as per the constitution with ensuring true democracy," he said.

The veteran politician came up with the remarks while speaking at an iftar party arranged by Nagorik Oikya at the Supreme Court Bar Association auditorium.

"That's why, I urge all to remain united. We'll ensure pure and functional democracy, and restore people's basic rights with united efforts, upholding the constitution," he added.

Dr Kamal, also the president of Gono Forum, said unity among people is a must to protect the independence earned through the blood of lakhs of martyrs. "We've

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1



RAMADAN TIPS

United Hospital

Exceptional People... Exceptional Care

Fasting and Regular Medication

Patients on long-term medication should talk to their doctors about changing the medication timing so they can take it outside the time of the fast. Those, whose disease is unstable or poorly controlled, should not fast. If the medication is required as treatment for a short illness, then the missed fasts can be compensated by fasting on other days after getting well.

Dr. Afsana Begum Consultant, Internal Medicine

CALL 10666
9852466

For Appointment
Emergency & Ambulance