



PADMA BRIDGE RAIL LINK PROJECT IS BEING BUILT WITH BSRM

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India set to start trial run next month

REJAUL KARIM BYRON and MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR

India is set to start in January the trial run for transporting goods between its northeastern states and other parts using Bangladesh's Chattogram and Mongla ports.

The details of the charges and other fees, to be received by Bangladesh, would be finalised before the first trial run, officials said yesterday after a shipping secretary-level talks in the capital.

During the trial run, goods from Kolkata would be transported to Chattogram port through the sea route. Later, those would be carried to the Indian state of Tripura by road via Akhaura land port in Bangladesh, said the officials who attended the two-day meeting.

"The first trial run will take place in January," Indian Shipping Secretary Gopal Krishna told reporters, adding, "Then we will see what kind of glitches come in and [we will] fix it. After that, we will have the second trial run and then we will ask the traders to take over and move goods."

About the charges and fees, he said, "There are no disagreements on charges... We will have to sit and finalise details of the proposals."

Bangladesh Shipping Secretary Abdus Samad said, "Fees and charges [for carrying Indian goods] will be applied as per the tariff schedule of the Chattogram and Mongla ports. We will charge fees according to the regulations."

He said both Bangladesh and India are signatories of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT). According to the GATT principle, no custom duties will be applicable

SEE PAGE 17 COL 2



WINTER FRIEND

A flock of migratory birds takes flight above Laksar Dighi in Chattogram's Kadalpur village in Raozan upazila. The birds are regular winter visitors and have endeared themselves with the locals so much that some of them actually guard the birds' seasonal habitat against disturbances. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: RAJIB RATHAN



On this day in 1971

DECEMBER 6

India acknowledges Bangladesh as a free and sovereign state. Indian PM Indira Gandhi declares it in the parliament. Following the declaration, Pakistan unites all diplomatic relations with India. Pakistan Election Commission suspends the by-polls in 'East Pakistan' due to the Indo-Pak war. The election was meant to be held on December 7.

Muktibahini take firm position at Laksham, Akhaura, Choudhagram and

SEE PAGE 17 COL 1

Metro Line-6 to link Kamalapur

Survey finds 31 buildings on planned 1.16km route

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

The government is going to extend the MRT Line-6 -- now under construction from Uttara to Motijheel -- up to Kamalapur Railway Station so that people can avail the rail service directly from the country's largest railway station.

Dhaka Mass Transit Company Limited (DMTCL), a government-owned company implementing the project, has completed a topography survey and selected an alignment for the 1.16km line under the same project.

"There is a problem here as we will not be able to build the rail lines over the street... Apart from some makeshift structures on the alignment, there are 31 permanent structures [buildings], the land of which we have to acquire," said MAN Siddique, managing director of DMTCL.

"We are now talking to them [the building owners] under social survey programme," he said at his office yesterday.

Contacted, Railways Minister Nurul Islam Sujon said both the railways and metro rail are for the people.

"We have a plan to turn the Kamalapur Railway Station into a multi-modal hub, and the extension work [of MRT Line-6] has to be done in coordination with our plan," he told The Daily Star yesterday.

The construction work of MRT Line-6, the country's first metro rail project, has made 38.35 percent progress as of November, and the MRT Line-6 is expected to open on December 16, 2021, when the country will be celebrating the golden jubilee of independence.

Once completed, the 20.10km metro rail service with 16 stations will be capable of carrying 60,000 passengers an hour, reducing travel time from Uttara to Motijheel from at least two hours to less than an hour. After the extension work, the total length of the rail route would be 21.26km

SEE PAGE 17 COL 2

Buet suspends eight more over ragging

DU CORRESPONDENT

The Buet authorities have suspended eight more students from the university for their involvement in ragging students in Titumir Hall.

Buet's Board of Residence and Discipline made the decision after a report was submitted by a committee formed to investigate the recent ragging at the dormitory, said a university press release yesterday.

The authorities said the suspensions were for different periods but did not mention those. They also expelled the students from the hall, said the release.

The students are: Tanvir Hasnain, Mirza Mohammad Galib, Zahidul Islam, Muntasir Moin, Asif Mahmud, Muntasir Ahmed Khan, Mohibullah Hoque Mugdho, and Anfarur Rahman.

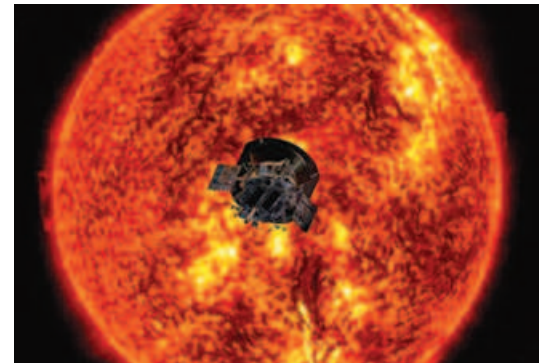
Besides, six other students were suspended from the hall for different periods on the same grounds.

The authorities also warned seven students, including the six, so that such incidents do not repeat in future.

On November 28, Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (Buet) authorities suspended nine students from the university for their involvement

SEE PAGE 17 COL 1

Sun yields its secrets to Parker Solar Probe



AFP, Paris

Nasa's Parker Solar Probe, having survived its closest encounter so far with the Sun, has sent back a "spectacular trove" of data on its corona, the super-hot outer edge of its atmosphere, scientists said Wednesday.

The car-sized probe, launched in August last year, will come within some four million miles (six million kilometres) of the sun's surface during a series of fly-bys at other distances and trajectories over seven years.

It is hoped it will allow a better understanding of the solar wind and electromagnetic storms which can cause chaos on Earth by knocking out the power grid.

SEE PAGE 17 COL 6

Doctor, cop sent to jail in dowry cases

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

Courts in Joypurhat have sent a doctor and a police officer to jail in separate dowry cases filed by their wives.

Judge Iqbal Bahar of Chief Judicial Magistrate's court yesterday rejected the bail petition of Bibhas Kumar Sharma, 33, medical officer of Narail Sadar Hospital.

Lawyer Nripendranath Mondal said Bibhas was to torture his wife Dr Choiti Roy as her family refused to pay Tk 10 lakh as dowry.

As he forced her out of

SEE PAGE 17 COL 5



PRAYER TIMING DECEMBER 6

Fazr Juma Asr Maghrib Esha
AZAN 5-15 12-30 3-45 5-19 7-00
JAMAAT 5-50 1-15 4-00 5-22 7-30

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

'BSF' picks up 2 fishermen from Padma

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Two Bangladeshi fishermen were picked up allegedly by Indian Border Security Force in Forhadpur Nirmal Char area from the Padma of Rajshahi's Godagari upazila yesterday afternoon.

The victims are: Omar Ali, 44, and Abdur Rahim, 55, of Premtoli Kathalbaria village of the upazila, said local fishermen.

BSF members of Tikna Char camp under 35 BSF Battalion entered Bangladesh territory in a speedboat and caught the fishermen when they were returning home with their catch in a boat around 4:00pm, Nayan Ali, a member of Matikata Union Parishad, said, quoting other fishermen.

"They dragged the fishermen onto their speedboat," he said.

Contacted, Lt Col Ferdous Mahmud, director of 1 BCB Battalion in Rajshahi, said they could not learn anything officially from BSF members.

The BCB official said

SEE PAGE 17 COL 6



A van crosses a badly damaged bridge in Paschim Jaflong Chotkhel area in Sylhet's Gowainghat upazila yesterday. Locals said part of the bridge's approach road caved in six months ago, after which the LGRD did some makeshift repairs using sandbags and bamboos. Those too were flooded away by recent rains.

PHOTO: SHEIKH NASIR

Draft articles of impeachment against Trump

House Speaker Pelosi instructs Congress panel; White House says Democrats should be 'ashamed'

REUTERS, Washington

US House of Representatives Speaker Nancy Pelosi yesterday said she has directed a House committee to draft articles of impeachment against President Donald Trump over his effort to pressure Ukraine to investigate a political rival, a historic step that sets up a fight over whether to oust him from office.

"The president abused his power for his own personal political benefit at the expense of our national security by withholding military aid and (a) crucial Oval Office meeting in exchange for an announcement of an investigation into his political rival," Pelosi said in a televised statement.

The impeachment fight undertaken by House Democrats is unfolding even as the Republican president is running for re-election in 2020.

"Sadly, but with confidence and humility, with allegiance to our Founders and our hearts full of love for America, today I am asking our chairman to proceed with articles of impeachment," she added, referring to House Judiciary Committee Chairman Jerrold Nadler.

Pelosi made the remarks a day after the Judiciary Committee held a hearing in which three constitutional law experts called by Democratic lawmakers said Trump had engaged in conduct that represents impeachable offenses under the Constitution. A fourth expert called

SEE PAGE 17 COL 2