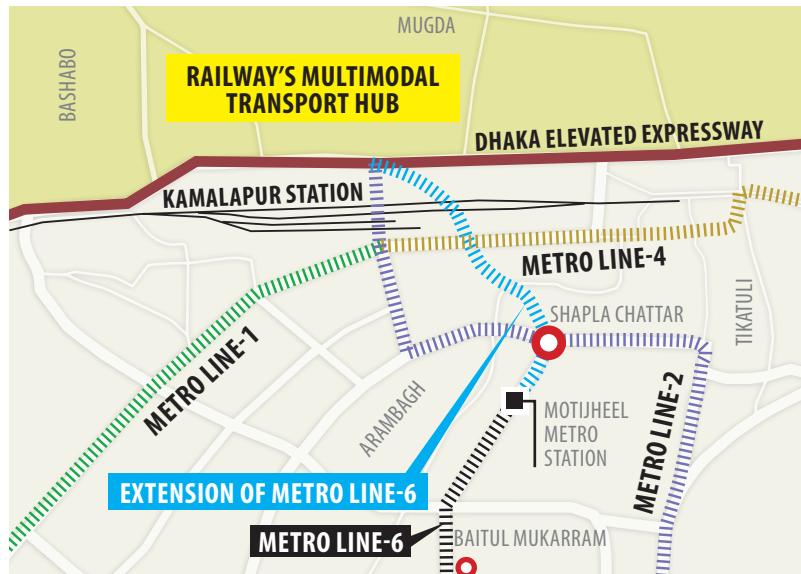


Tussle over metro line-6 extension

Railway says the change will upset its mega plan to turn Kamalapur station into a multimodal transport hub



TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

Bangladesh Railway has expressed serious reservations about a move to extend a metrorail line up to Kamalapur Railway Station, saying it will jeopardise its mega plan to turn the country's prime railway station into a multimodal transport hub.

The mass rapid transit (MRT) line-6, the first-ever metrorail project in the country, was initially designed as an elevated track from Uttara to Motijheel. Later, a skywalk was planned to connect the line with Kamalapur Railway Station.

Last year, Dhaka Mass Transit Company Ltd (DMTCL), a government-owned company implementing the metrorail project, planned to stretch the MRT line-6 directly to the rail station.

"The present proposal of extension of MRT Line-6 alignment on the Kamalapur Station premises is not acceptable," reads the minutes of a meeting held at the

Railway Bhaban last month.

The railway authorities sent the minutes to the DMTCL on December 30 last year. "After detailed discussions, it is found that extension of MRT line-6 will confront the basic theme of development of MMT [Multimodal Transport Hub] and other BR development work."

Railways Minister Nurul Islam presided over the meeting, which discussed "Development Programme of Bangladesh Railways at Kamalapur Railway Station". The Daily Star has obtained a copy of the meeting minutes.

In another development, Kajima Corporation, a Japanese company which had already outlined a concept of the hub, informed the BR that it would withdraw their proposal if the MRT line-6 extension plan is accepted, said a top railway official.

BR Director General Md Shamsuzzaman acknowledged that they have sent the

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3



BNP men try to escort party mayor candidate Tabith Awal, in blue panjabi, to safety after he came under attack, allegedly from supporters of an Awami League-backed councillor candidate, while campaigning in the city's Gabtoli yesterday. *Inset*, with Tabith trapped in a crowd, a scuffle breaks out in the area.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

BNP's Tabith attacked

AL ward councillor candidate's men swoop on him during campaign

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Tabith Awal, BNP's mayor candidate for Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC), and his followers came under attack while campaigning in the capital's Gabtoli area yesterday.

BNP leaders alleged the attackers were supporters of a local ward councillor candidate backed by the ruling Awami League.

AL leaders, however, denied their involvement in the incident.

Witnesses said a group of people started throwing brickbats at Tabith and his followers when they were electioneering in Gabtoli's Bajarpura area around 11:15am.

Tabith suffered minor injuries. Several of his followers were also injured.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

Virus alarm

Passenger screening begins at 2 airports

STAR REPORT

The airport authorities in Dhaka and Chattogram yesterday began the screening process of China-returnee passengers to prevent probable outbreak of a SARS-like virus that has claimed six lives so far.

A medical team at the Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport (HSIA) in Dhaka started

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ENTRY



With the Dhaka city polls only nine days away, most of the city streets and alleys have been flooded with posters of mayor and councillor candidates. Laminated with non-biodegradable plastic, these posters pose a serious threat to environment. The photo was taken in the city's Khilgaon area yesterday.

PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ

LAMINATED POSTERS IN CITY POLLS

A big threat to environment

MAHBUBUR RAHMAN KHAN

Although they promised a clean and green Dhaka city, mayor and councillor candidates in the DSCC and the DNCC polls have flooded their areas with laminated posters, which are harmful for the environment.

The candidates are using posters laminated with plastic to protect those from rainwater and humidity during the electioneering period.

Visiting nine wards of the two city corporations, this correspondent found most of the posters were laminated.

The situation is similar in areas in nearly 20 other wards, locals said.

There are a total of 129 wards in the two city corporation areas.

According to environmentalists, such posters pose a serious threat to the environment. They said the laminated posters could neither be destroyed nor recycled.

Therefore, the posters will be in the dumping grounds for years only to add to environment pollution, they said.



A worker laminating posters at a printing press in the capital's Arambagh area.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

adding that the huge quantity of single-use plastic would clog the drains and cause waterlogging in the coming rainy season.

Shahriar Hossain, secretary general of Environment and Social Development Organisation (ESDO), said the process of lamination also releases toxic chemicals and harm the environment.

Thick polythene is used for lamination and a special chemical is used to turn polythene thicker. Under a certain

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3



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