

DHAKA BYPASS EXPRESSWAY PROJECT Moves ahead finally

Still years behind schedule; cost escalates

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

Upgradation of Dhaka Bypass Road into a four-lane access-control expressway, the first-ever Public Private Partnership project under Roads and Highways Department (RHD), is finally making progress.

But the physical project cost is going to rise by 20 percent, Tk 3,262 crore from Tk 3,039 crore, as it took five years to the select private partner, acquire land and manage fund.

The original deadline of the project was June 2020 and the cost for "Support to Joydevpur-Debogam-Bhulta-Madanpur road (Dhaka Bypass) PPP Project" was Tk 236.50 crore.

Now, the RHD has sought an extension to the project completion deadline up to June 2024 and incase the support project cost to Tk 674.74 crore, an increase by 185.30 percent than the original estimated cost.

The revision proposal is likely to be placed before the meeting of the Executive Committee of

the National Economic Council (Enec) today, sources said.

However, the private partner has already managed funds and started the physical work. The RHD has also been able to acquire 73 percent land for the project.

"The major challenge for the project was to manage funds by the private partner, which is now over. We hope the physical works would be completed by December 2023," ABM Sertajur Rahman, deputy director of the project, told The Daily Star yesterday.

FIRST PPP PROJECT OF RHD

The government wanted to expand the two-lane Joydevpur-Debogam-Bhulta-Madanpur road, widely known as Dhaka Bypass Road, into a four-lane highway for better communication between Chattogram port and the country's north-western regions.

The 48km road connects the Joydevpur-Tangail National Highway, Dhaka- Chattogram National Highway, Dhaka-Sylhet National Highway, Dhaka-

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Different saw mill owners have been bringing in tree trunks and barks from different parts of the country on trawlers through waterways. These trees are used to make various furniture and other necessities. The photo was taken at Buriganga river in Kamrangirchar area yesterday.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

FRAMING A CHILD It's unfortunate if confession was forced

HC observes, engages state counsel for probe

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday said forcing a confessional statement out of accused was "unfortunate for the country".

"We don't still know whether confessional statement was taken forcibly from accused, a minor boy, in his younger brother's murder case in Bogura. If the allegation of taking confessional statement in connection with this case is true, it is very unfortunate for the country," said the HC bench of Justice Jahangir Hossain Selim and Justice Md Atoar Rahman.

The bench made the observation during the hearing on a criminal revision petition filed challenging the legality of the trial proceedings at the Juvenile Court in Bogura, in connection with the case where an underage boy was accused of murdering his eight-year-old brother.

The HC bench asked the state counsel to look into the allegation and fixed June 29 for further hearing of the petition.

During yesterday's hearing, petitioners' lawyer Mohammad Shishir Manir told the

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ROAD TO FREEDOM
THIS DAY IN BANGLADESH LIBERATION WAR HISTORY

Senator urges Nixon to halt Pakistani ship

JUNE 22, 1971

SHAMSUDDOZA SAJEN

KENNEDY REPORTS ON PAKISTAN ARMS

The office of Senator Edward M Kennedy said today the state department had informed the senator that two Pakistani freighters now en route from New York to Karachi were carrying ammunition for the Pakistani armed forces.

A spokesman said Kennedy was advised by a ranking state department official that the Pakistani freighter Sunderbans carried munitions and other military equipment sold to Pakistan under the US Foreign Military Sales programme as well as through commercial suppliers.

Kennedy was told, the spokesman said, that the freighter Padma carried munitions along with spare parts and other military-use items bought commercially by Pakistan and licensed for export by the state department.

The state department refused to comment on Kennedy's report. A spokesman said "we do not know what there is aboard the ship" and announced that the state department and the Bureau of Customs had launched a joint investigation to determine the nature of the Padma's cargo.

In New Delhi, Indian Foreign Minister Swaran Singh said today that if the United States was shipping munitions to Pakistan, "it is a clear departure from the assurances given me".

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Mannan wants massive reforms in bureaucracy

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A massive reform is needed in the bureaucracy to modernise it as the bureaucrats still follow many age-old rules that have become irrelevant, Planning Minister MA Mannan said yesterday.

"We need a massive reform in bureaucracy. We need to delve deep into the matter," he said at a virtual discussion.

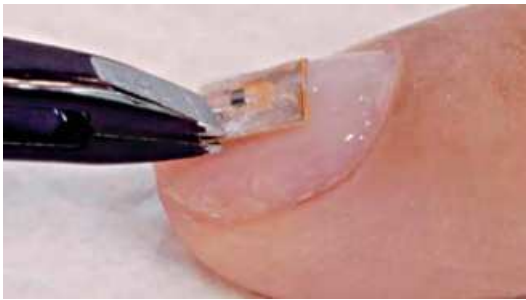
"Reforms and bureaucracy are two sides of the same coin because bureaucracy works in line with the rules laid out in rule books."

Bureaucrats in the country still follow many rule books that were written long ago and are irrelevant in the present context, he noted.

Mannan said his ministry is carrying out reforms in one of its important wings

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'Microchip manicure' turns your nails into business cards



CNN ONLINE

A beauty salon in Dubai is giving new meaning to the phrase "chipped nails." Lanour Beauty Lounge is offering a tiny microchip for customers' fingernails.

The chips can have information embedded that allows them to be used as a digital business card, or to pass on information such as an Instagram handle.

They use near field communication technology to connect with mobile devices. "We install the information that you want, like your name, your mobile number, your social media accounts and website as well," salon founder Nour Makarem told CNN.

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Covid claims constable's life

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A policeman died at a hospital in Jhenaidah yesterday, three days after he had tested positive for Covid-19.

The deceased was Moshir Rahman, 45, a constable of Kaliganj Police Station in the district.

He tested Covid-19 positive on June 18 after he had showed symptoms following a visit to his village home in Magura, said police sources.

He breathed his last around 4:30am while being treated at Jhenaidah Sadar Hospital, said OC Mahfuzur Rahman of the police station.

So far, 95 police members have died of Covid-19 across the country, according to the database of the police headquarters.



SUNAMGANJ MAYHEM Prime suspect gets bail

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

A Sunamganj court yesterday granted bail to the prime accused in cases filed in connection with the attack on Hindu houses in Naogaon village of the district's Shalla upazila on March 17.

After hearing the bail plea, Sunamganj District and Sessions Judge Md Wahiduzzaman Sikder granted bail to Shahidul Islam Swadhin, said Selim Nawaj, court inspector of Sunamganj police.

A Facebook post by Jhumon Das Apon of Naogaon village criticising Hefajat-e-Islam leader

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RAINY DAY TREAT... Two girls share an umbrella and wait for a phuchka seller, who has sheltered himself and his products with separate plastic covers, to reopen after the spell of driving rain at the Shahid Minar yesterday.

PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ

COVID JABS FOR ALL ADULTS India begins free vaccination drive

Sees fewest cases since March 24; Indonesia tightens curbs as cases soar

AGENCEIS

India opened up free vaccinations to all adults in an attempt to bolster its inoculation drive yesterday, as Prime Minister Narendra Modi kicked off a muted International Yoga Day hailing the practice's "protective" properties against the coronavirus.

The country's vaccination drive has significantly slowed in recent months due to a shortage of jabs and hesitancy, even as it battled a vicious surge in cases in April and May that overwhelmed the healthcare system in many places.

Case numbers have since fallen sharply and the authorities have again relaxed many restrictions, sparking fears of another wave.

Over the last 24 hours, India reported 53,256 new cases, the lowest since March 24. Infections hit a peak of about 400,000 a day in May and deaths soared to around 170,000 in April-May.

The government had expanded the vaccine roll-out to include all adults aged below 45 on May 1, but states and private hospitals had to procure and buy the shots themselves for the younger age group, leading to confusion and shortages.

But New Delhi later changed tack, announcing it would procure 75 percent of vaccine supplies and distribute them to states so that they can inoculate people for free.

So far it has administered 280 million shots, with barely four percent of people fully vaccinated.

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PRAYER TIMING JUNE 22

Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
4:05	12:45	5:00	6:52	8:17
JAMAT	4:20	1:15	5:15	6:55

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION