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EAST-WEST ELEVATED EXPRESSWAY Govt goes for public-pvt partnership

REJAUUL KARIM BYRON and DWAIPIYAN BARUA

The long-awaited elevated expressway from Hemayetpur in Savar to Langolbandh in Sonargaon yesterday got some impetus after the government decided to implement the project under a public-private partnership.

The government will select the partner in the project through tender since several companies expressed interest, said Md Shamsul Arefin, additional secretary of the cabinet division, after the meeting of the cabinet committee on economic affairs, where the decision was taken.

Companies of China, Japan, South Korea are keen to invest in the project, according to officials in the bridge division and PPP office.

Called the Dhaka East-West Elevated Expressway, the project is aimed at creating a vital link between major highways and is expected to increase GDP growth by 0.317 per cent, according to a feasibility study on the project done in August 2017.

The users of the 39.2 kilometre-long expressway, which would pass through Nimtoli-Keraniganj-Ekuria-Janjira-Fatullah-Haliganj Bandar, would have to pay an average toll of \$0.147 per km or Tk 11.5 per km, the study stated.

It would allow traffic to switch highways and skip the congested streets of the capital.

Vehicles on the Dhaka-Aricha highway would be able to speed towards the Dhaka-Chattogram highway with options to go in the directions of Mawa and Sylhet.

In turn, vehicles from Chattogram and Sylhet would be able to bypass the city and head towards Mawa, Aricha and the northern districts of the country.

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A plane landing at the Saidpur Airport in Nilphamari. Inset: A man making his way through a barbed wire gap in a surrounding wall. Due to lax security measures, people easily pass through the walls to graze cattle, cut grass, and even to watch flight operations. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: EMA ASADUZZAMAN

A runway way too vulnerable

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Nilphamari

Vulnerabilities in the boundary wall of Saidpur Airport in Nilphamari have given rise to security concerns as locals regularly enter the facility to graze cattle, cut grass and even for sightseeing.

The country's northernmost airport operates 10-12 flights on the Dhaka-Saidpur route daily and one flight a week on the Chattogram-Saidpur and Cox's Bazar-Saidpur routes. The process to upgrade it to an international airport is underway.

This correspondent on Wednesday visited villages around the airport, built on 136.59 acres of land, and witnessed the vulnerability in different points of the wall and how locals entered the airport illegally.

At Poschimpara, there was no barbed wire on top of 70-80 feet of the airport's boundary wall.

Outsiders can enter using a ladder to cut the grass near the runway or to see planes landing and taking off.

According to locals,

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SI held over raping of woman in Khulna

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

A sub-inspector of the Detective Branch of Khulna Metropolitan Police was arrested yesterday over raping a woman.

Jahangir Alam allegedly stormed the hotel room of the woman and then raped her in front of her daughter early yesterday.

A Khulna court sent Jahangir to jail after he was produced before it yesterday evening, said police.

Hasan Al Mamun, officer-in-charge of Khulna Sadar Police Station, told The Daily Star that they arrested the SI at the hotel.

The woman was sent to the One-Stop Crisis Centre (OCC) of Khulna Medical College Hospital, he said.

Citing the victim's family, the OC said the victim, along with her ailing daughter, reached Khulna from Mongla Tuesday afternoon to see a doctor.

They rented a room at a hotel adjacent to the city's Shaheed Hadith Park.

Around 2:30am, the SI forcibly entered the room and raped the mother in front of the sick daughter, he said.

Hearing her screams, the hotel manager called in the police who arrested the SI.

The woman filed a rape case yesterday.

BM Nuruzzaman, deputy commissioner of Khulna Metropolitan Police's intelligence branch, claimed that Jahangir was drunk.

ROAD TO FREEDOM THIS DAY IN BANGLADESH LIBERATION WAR HISTORY

Pakistan accepts truce call of UN

DECEMBER 9, 1971

SHAMSUDDOZA SAJEN

UN TRUCE CALL: PAKISTAN ACCEPTS, INDIA REJECTS Pakistan informed the United Nations today that she had "decided to accept" the General Assembly's call for ceasefire and for a withdrawal of hostile troops to their own soil.

In message to UN Secretary General U Thant, Pakistani chief delegate Agha Shahi said, "Under the instructions of my Government, I have the honor to state that even though the resolution fails to take note of the Indian aggression against Pakistan (which has been admitted by India), the Government of Pakistan has decided to accept the call for an immediate ceasefire and the withdrawal of troops contained in that resolution.

"Inasmuch as the resolution provides for an immediate withdrawal of the troops of each party to its own side of the border and thus would stop bloodshed, Pakistan is willing to overlook its inadequacies at this time," he added.

Elaborating on the Pakistani message, a delegation spokesman said that a ceasefire and a withdrawal "cannot be unilateral." This confirmed a Government declaration in Rawalpindi that Pakistan would comply with the Assembly resolution only if India did the same.

On the other hand, Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi rejected the General Assembly's truce call. She said that India would "take all steps" to achieve the independence of Bangladesh.

The New York Times reported that the emissary to the United States of the Bengali "secessionists" welcomed signs that

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Petition filed with HC over Murad's JS membership

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A lawyer filed a writ petition with the High Court challenging the legality of Murad Hasan's Jatiya Sangsad membership yesterday.

Supreme Court lawyer Md Eunos Ali Akond submitted the petition as a public interest litigation a day after Murad resigned from the post of state minister for information and broadcasting.

The prime minister asked him to resign from his state minister post following a wave of criticism for his derogatory remarks.

Lawyer Eunos submitted the petition saying that Murad violated his oath as a JS member by making the remarks.

He prayed to the HC to pass necessary directives for conducting a judicial inquiry into Murad's obscene comments.

Meanwhile, the cyber and special crime unit of the Detective Branch will

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New telescope to unravel mysteries of black holes



CNN ONLINE

We're about to get a new perspective on some of the most extreme objects in the universe. In the early morning hours of today, Nasa will launch its Imaging X-ray Polarimetry Explorer mission, or IXPE, to measure X-rays released by black holes and neutron stars.

The satellite was scheduled to launch around 1:00 am ET aboard a SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket from Nasa's Kennedy Space Center in Florida. Live coverage of the launch will be available on Nasa TV and the agency's website.

The spacecraft, which is the collaborative effort of Nasa and the Italian Space Agency, carries three telescopes. While IXPE isn't as big as Nasa's Chandra X-ray observatory, it is the first space

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Tigers crash to innings defeat

SPORTS REPORTER

In a dramatic fifth and final day of the second Test, a woeful batting display from Bangladesh saw them crash to an innings and eight-run defeat to Pakistan despite the fact that rain had washed out around two prior days of the Test at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur.

Pin-drop silence and suspense were the defining features of the final 20 minutes of the day as the hosts battled to save the game, with the Bangladesh team in the dressing room perhaps praying for a

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PRAYER TIMING DECEMBER 9

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

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

Branch Opening

Complete Islamic Banking services at the new UCB Taqwa Islamic Banking Branch

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Mr. Saifuzzaman Chowdhury MP, Honorable Minister, Ministry of Land, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh will inaugurate the branch as the **Chief Guest**.

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