



## Metro to be costlier than Padma bridge

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

The eagerly-awaited Dhaka metro rail project is set to witness huge cost escalation and time extension after a new drawback has shown up in the design: inconvenient entrance and exit points at the stations.

As per the existing plan, getting in and out of the stations would not be comfortable due to space constraints, said MAN Siddique, managing director of Dhaka Mass Transit Company (DMTCL), the project implementing authority.

"So, considering people's benefit, we have

### DHAKA MRT LINE-6 EXPENSES

- Supposed to cost Tk **21,985cr**
- Now another Tk **11,487cr** required
- Proposed total cost Tk **33,472cr**
- Scheduled for completion by Jun'24
- Now aiming for Dec'25 finish
- Partial operation from Dec'22 still on track



decided to build spacious footpaths outside the stations," he told The Daily Star yesterday.

While Siddique did not elaborate how much would the exercise cost, DMTCL officials said a large portion of the additional Tk 11,487 crore being sought for the project would go towards it.

If the extra funds are signed off on, it would make the Dhaka Metro Rail, one of the eight fast-track projects of the government, costlier than the Tk 30,192 crore Padma Bridge, which is expected to add 1.26 percent to Bangladesh's GDP.

The metro rail's contribution would be no less: it is expected to substantially bring down Dhaka's traffic congestion, which eats up about Tk 55,685 crore a year, according to the Accident Research Institute of the Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology.

DMTCL would have to purchase land for the footpaths and most of the land surrounding the stations are private property, said an official working on the project on condition of anonymity due to sensitivity of

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Boats floating through foam caused by pollution on the Buriganga near the capital's Shyambazar. The river has been a victim to pollution for decades due to mindless dumping of factory waste and domestic sewage. To save it, tanneries were relocated from Hazaribagh to Savar five years ago. The problem, however, remains and goes on deteriorating the river's health. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

## Buriganga suffering, Dhaleshwari worse off

*Finds a study on water quality of the two rivers*

MOSTAFA YOUSUF

The water quality of the Buriganga continues to be poor even though it has been almost five years since the tanneries from the capital's Hazaribagh area were relocated to an estate in Hemayetpur of Savar.

The shift to Hemayetpur, meanwhile, has seen the Dhaleshwari

river in an even poorer state as it bears the brunt of the toxic substances emitted by rawhide processing.

The grim scenario of both rivers was revealed in a joint study by the geography and environment department of Jahangirnagar University, environmental science department of Stamford University and Waterkeepers, Bangladesh. The

study was released yesterday.

The tanneries were moved to Hemayetpur in April, 2017 following a High Court order.

Even though the tanneries are no longer near the Buriganga, pollution from rawhide processing and other factors continue to cause deterioration of its water quality, the

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### NCC POLLS

The heat is on, as barbs rule campaigns

MOHAMMAD AL MASUM MOLLA AND SANAD SAHA

Electioneering in the Narayanganj city polls has heated up as the two major mayor hopefuls have accused each other of foiling the peaceful election atmosphere.

Ruling Awami League nominee Selina Hayat Ivy alleged that her rival Taimur Alam Khandakar, an independent candidate and also a BNP leader, was making baseless allegations about the polls atmosphere with a view to foil the atmosphere.

Taimur, on the other hand, complained that law enforcers were harassing his campaigners and threatening voters and demanded the prime minister's intervention in this regard to hold the January 16 polls in a free and fair manner.

Police officials, however, denied the allegations saying they were working hard to hold a free and fair election and carrying out regular drives so that no one can hamper the peaceful polls atmosphere in the city where more than five lakh people are eligible to vote.

Starting their campaigning early yesterday, the two candidates visited different areas of the city corporation.

Ivy, also an AL

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