

## 314 brick kilns shut down in and around Dhaka

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

To control the air pollution, some 314 illegal brick kilns out of 411 in Dhaka and four surrounding districts -- Gazipur, Manikganj, Narayanganj and Munshiganj -- were shut down from November, 2021 to May 16, 2022.

Although all illegal kilns in four districts -- Gazipur, Manikganj, Dhaka and Munshiganj -- have been evicted, some 97 of them are still running in Narayanganj and polluting the environment, Abdul Hamid, director general of Department of Environment (DoE), told the High Court yesterday.

DoE, district administrations and owners have shut down the kilns, in line with the HC directives, he said.

Abdul said this during the hearing of a petition filed by Human Rights and Peace for Bangladesh (HRPB) in 2019.

Tk 20.71 crore of fines have been collected from 953 brick kilns across the country in the current fiscal, he said. The remaining illegal kilns could not be evicted, as the teams concerned could not reach the remote areas where those have been established.

Around 275 petitions filed with the HC, challenging the moves to shut the kilns down, have been received by DoE from November, 2021 to March, 2022.

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Even though they just wanted to get some relief from the summer swelter, these three, being kids, turned this mundane event of cooling themselves off using a public tap into a fun activity by splashing water at each other. This photo was taken in Old Dhaka's Lalbagh area.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

## Homecoming Day of Hasina observed

BSS, Dhaka

The 42nd Homecoming Day of Awami League President and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina was observed yesterday, recalling her return home on May 17 in 1981 after a long exile.

Marking the day, various organisations, including Awami League, arranged elaborate programmes throughout the country.

Doa and prayers were offered at mosques, temples, churches and pagodas to mark the day.

On May 17 in 1981, AL President Sheikh Hasina returned home after six years of exile defying different obstacles of the then government.

Boarding an aircraft of Indian Airlines, Hasina reached the then Kurmitola Airport in Dhaka from New Delhi via Kolkata at 4:30pm on that day four decades back.

Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was brutally killed along with most of his family members on August 15, 1975.

His two daughters -- Sheikh Hasina and Sheikh Rehana -- luckily escaped as they were abroad.

In a national council session of the Awami League on February 14-16, 1981, Sheikh Hasina was elected party president.

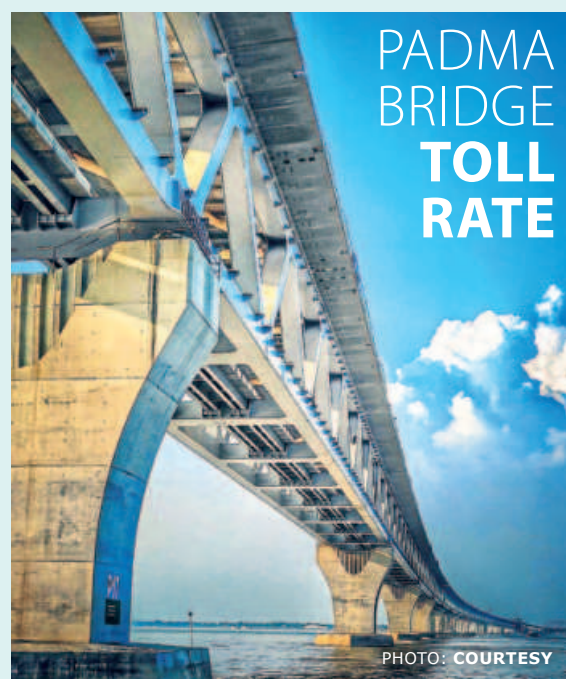
**PRAYER TIMING**  
MAY 18

	Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN	4:10	12:45	5:00	6:36	8:00
JAMAAT	4:45	1:15	5:15	6:40	8:30

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

## Tk 750 for car, Tk 100 for bike

Govt fixes toll for Padma Bridge



PADMA BRIDGE TOLL RATE

VEHICLES	FERRY TOLL (in Tk)	PADMA BRIDGE TOLL (in Tk)
Bike	70	100
Car, Jeep	500	750
Pick-up, luxury jeep, Prado	800	1,200
Microbus	860	1,300
Minibus	950	1,400
Medium bus	1,350	2,000
Bus	1,580	2,400
Truck (up to 5 tonnes)	1,080	1,600
Truck (5 to 8 tonnes)	1,400	2,100
Truck (8 to 11 tonnes)	1,850	2,800
Truck (three-axle)	3,940	5,500
Trailer (4 axles)		6,000
Trailer (above 4 axles)		6,000+ (per axle 1,500)

PHOTO: COURTESY

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has fixed the toll rate for the long-cherished Padma bridge, which is expected to open to the public by the end of next month.

The Bridge Division yesterday issued a circular with the toll rate, which is around 1.5 times higher than the average toll paid on ferries plying the Padma.

The circular was issued after Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina approved the proposed toll rate early this week, Monjur Hossain, secretary of the division, told this correspondent yesterday.

The toll rate will come into force on the day the bridge will be opened to the public. However, the date for opening the longest bridge in the country has not been fixed yet, the secretary said.

Meanwhile, National Committee to Protect Shipping, Roads and Railways, a non-government organisation, demanded that the authorities reduce the toll. As per the rate, a private car will have to pay Tk 750 as a toll, while the ferry toll is Tk 500.

A bike on the bridge will have to pay Tk 100, while on the ferry, it would pay Tk 70. A minibus on the bridge would pay Tk 1,400, while on the ferry the toll will be Tk 950.

Contacted, Kandaker Enayet Ullah, secretary general of Bangladesh Road Transport Owners Association, said the government did talk with them before fixing the toll rate.

He said they will raise the issue at a meeting the

bridge authorities on May 24.

Asked about the possible impact of the toll, he said the toll will ultimately be adjusted with the bus fare. Asked whether bus fare may rise in that case, he said, "Not that much."

The construction of the Padma Bridge -- which is being constructed to establish a direct connection between the capital and the southern region -- is now at its final stage. Once operational, the 6.15km bridge will connect the capital with 21 southwestern districts by road and rail, providing relief to tens of thousands often struggling with only two ferry terminals on the route, especially ahead of major holidays like Eid.

The bridge -- a dual carriageway with a single rail line on a separate level -- is expected to boost the country's GDP by 1.2 percent.

After several revisions, the deadline of the project was set on June 2023, including a one-year defect liability period, for which the cost rose to Tk 30,193 crore from the original estimate of Tk 10,161 crore.

Top officials involved with the project, even Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader on several occasions said the bridge would be opened by June this year.

But the PM last month told the parliament that the bridge would be open to public by the end of this year, creating uncertainty over the timing of the opening.

Quader, however, said there is no scope of

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Monjur Hossain  
Secretary of Bridge Division

## 'Invest more in education'

### Speakers tell event on achieving SDG 4

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Ensuring quality education at all levels is a major challenge in achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in the sector, said speakers at an event yesterday.

They were speaking at a session of the 2nd National Conference on SDGs Implementation Reviews (SIR). The three-day conference, inaugurated on Monday, is being hosted by the General Economics Division (GED) of the Planning Commission in partnership with Governance Innovation Unit (GIU), of the Prime Minister's Office.

Speakers also opined that lack of inter-ministerial coordination and less budget in

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## INVITATION

An international exhibition on COMPLETE pharma manufacturing technologies

13<sup>th</sup>  
**asia ASIA**  
**PHARMA EXPO LAB EXPO**  
**19 20 21 MAY 2022**

**FREE ENTRY** Time: 10 am to 6 pm

Venue: ICCB Expo Zone, Dhaka, BANGLADESH

**MEET THE EXHIBITORS DISPLAYING**

**PHARMA MACHINERY FOR PROCESSING & PACKAGING**  
**ANALYTICAL & BIOTECH LABS** **CLEANROOMS**  
**WATER MANAGEMENT** **API & EXCIPIENTS**  
**TURNKEY PROJECT CONSULTANTS**

**NOTE:** • Covid Protocol have to maintain as per Government Guidelines  
• Visitors below 18 years are strictly not allowed

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