



## Work of BRT project halted

Authorities say it won't resume until safety ensured; probe finds contractor solely to blame

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

Physical work of the entire Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Line-3 project will remain suspended until foolproof safety measures are in place, the authorities decided yesterday.

Top project officials met Asian Development Bank (ADB) officials at the latter's office in the capital and made the decision in the afternoon.

After major accidents, suspending project work until a safety review is done is an accepted international standard, said a top BRT official who attended the meeting.

"The ADB asked us to ensure 100 percent safety or to keep the project work suspended," the official said, adding that reviewing the safety measures may take around a week.

"After the meeting, we verbally conveyed the decision to the contractors. Our consultants will formally inform them.

"We will resume work, particularly at the places where safety review would be satisfactory."

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Ria tries to soothe her grieving husband Rezaul Karim Hridoy at the morgue of Shaheed Suhrawardy Medical College in the capital yesterday. The newlyweds were trying to come to terms with the loss of five family members, who died after a box girder fell on a car carrying them in Uttara.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

## Draw up plans to buy Russian oil

PM tells officials

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday instructed the authorities concerned to prepare a plan for buying fuel from Russia.

During a meeting of the Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (Ecne), she asked why Bangladesh could not buy fuel from Russia when India could, said Planning Minister MA Mannan, who attended the meeting.

The government on August 6 hiked prices of fuel, including diesel which is widely used in industrial, transport and agriculture sectors. Diesel price was raised by 42.5 percent to Tk 114 per litre from Tk 80. Prices of many essential products have been rising since.

Bangladesh currently buys fuel, under long-term government-to-government agreements, from Middle Eastern countries including Saudi Arabia and the UAE, and from companies in those countries.

In late May, Russia, facing sanctions after its invasion of Ukraine on February 24, made an offer to sell crude oil to Bangladesh.

The offer was then declined partly because, according to energy ministry officials, Russian crude oil is heavier than that imported from Arab countries, and the country's lone state-run refinery is designed to process the lighter crude oil.

Following yesterday's meeting it was not revealed whether the government was considering importing refined or crude oil from Russia, the world's third-largest oil producer.

Foreign experts will visit the refinery in Bangladesh to see whether the capacity can be built to refine Russian crude, Foreign Secretary Masud Bin Momen said at a separate event yesterday.

After the Ecne meeting, MA Mannan quoted the PM as saying, "Due to the Russia-Ukraine war, people are suffering because of the increase in global fuel prices. This is becoming a problem. India and other countries are buying oil from Russia -- so we have to see if we can buy."

After Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the European Union, the UK and the US imposed sanctions on Russian

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## 'Ma breathed her last in my arms'

SHAHEEN MOLLAH

For Ria, the newlywed who narrowly escaped death during Monday's accident in Dhaka's Uttara, trauma and tragedy knew no bounds.

"My mother [Fahima] took her last breath in my arms... "I also watched my aunt, Jhorna and her two children being crushed under the girder," she somehow managed to say while at the Shaheed Suhrawardy Medical College morgue.

Ria, a second-year student at Narayanganj's Tolaram College, and her husband Rezaul Karim Hridoy, a grocer, were among the seven passengers of a private car partially crushed by a segment of a box girder attached to a crane.

The two were the only survivors.

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## Please, engage with Myanmar

Rohingyas urge visiting UN rights chief over repatriation

STAR REPORT

Rohingya men and women yesterday appealed to UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Michelle Bachelet to help improve the conditions in Myanmar's Rakhine State so they can return to their homeland.

"We told the UN delegation that we fled the brutalities of the Myanmar



Michelle Bachelet

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## 'Bangladesh not in crisis'

IMF says negotiations for loan package expected to begin in October

REJAUL KARIM BYRON

Talks for the support package from the International Monetary Fund are likely to begin after the third week of October, said the Washington-based multilateral lender yesterday.

Given that Bangladesh is not in a crisis mode, there is not a fixed timeline or deadline set, said an IMF spokesperson in a media briefing that was attended by The Daily Star.

The first staff mission is expected to take place after the 2022 annual meetings of the IMF and the World Bank Group, which will take place in person from October 10 to October 16 in Washington DC.

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## NORWEGIAN COMPANY JOTUN BANGLADESH LIMITED STARTS ITS JOURNEY AT MEGHNA INDUSTRIAL ECONOMIC ZONE (MIEZ)

Jotun Bangladesh Ltd., a global paint manufacturer of Norway inaugurated its factory in Meghna Industrial Economic Zone (MIEZ), Sonargaon, Narayanganj on August 16, 2022. Honorable President of FBCCI Mr. Md. Jashim Uddin inaugurated the factory as Chief Guest. Chairman of Meghna Group of Industries (MGI) Mr. Mostafa Kamal was present as Special Guest and Deputy Head of Mission of Royal Norwegian Embassy in Dhaka Ms. Silje Fines Wannebo was present as Guest of Honor in the ceremony. President & CEO of Jotun Mr. Morten Fon and Managing Director of Jotun Bangladesh Ltd. Mr. Percy Jijina were also present.