



P3 CCTV cameras installed in 100 buses



P10 60 years ago, the Beatles began to play



P11 Benzema tipped to win Ballon d'Or



B4 Fishers feel pinch of hilsa catching ban

FIRST UNDERGROUND METRO Work finally starts in Dec

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

Civil works of the country's first underground metro rail will start in December this year, after a two-year delay.

The works of the Tk 52,561.43 crore project, the biggest infrastructure project in the transport sector, will start with land development for depot at Pitalganj in Narayanganj.

The deadline for the project is December 2026, according to project documents.

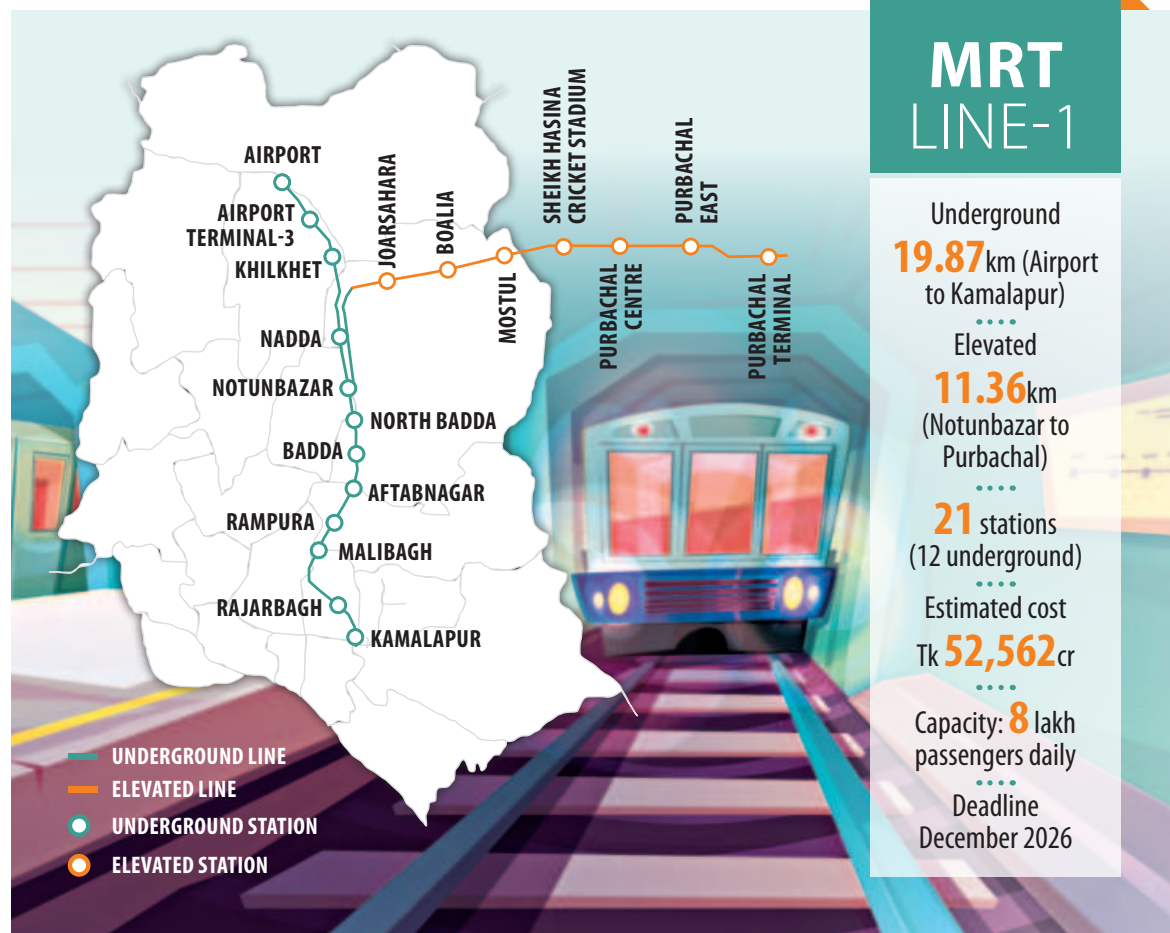
The board of directors of Dhaka Mass Transit Company Ltd (DMTCL), the implementing agency of the metro rail projects, on September 7 approved a proposal to appoint a joint venture firm led by a Japanese company for the development of the depot (package 1).

A contract with the firm is expected to be signed in mid-November and civil works of the project is likely to be started in the first week of December, said MAN Siddique, managing director of DMTCL.

"After the contract signing [for package-1], we will seek time from Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina for the ground breaking ceremony of the underground metro rail," he told The Daily Star yesterday.

In another development, metro rail authorities will

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HASINA-BOLKIAH MEET Two countries agree on energy collaboration

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh and Brunei have agreed to go for long-term collaboration in the energy sector, particularly in the supply of liquefied natural gas (LNG) and other petroleum



MYMENSINGH RALLY Cops sue 400 BNP men over violence

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

Police yesterday sued over 400 people in connection with violence between Awami League and BNP men in Mymensingh city on Saturday.

Of the accused, 23 are named and the rest are unnamed, said police.

Johirul Islam, sub-inspector of Mymensingh's Kotwali Police Station, filed the case over obstructing police from discharging duties and attacking law enforcers, said Shah Kamal Akanda, officer-in-charge of the police station.

Emran Saleh Prince, BNP central committee's organising secretary, alleged that police filed the "false and fabricated" case to harass them.

All the named accused, who are BNP men, were at a BNP rally in the city when the violence took place, he claimed.

Saturday's clash broke out at the city's Krishnachura Chattar, near Mymensingh Railway Station.

Prince also alleged that AL men attacked BNP men first without any provocation.

Mymensingh district unit AL's General Secretary Moazzem Hossain Babul denied

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INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR THE ERADICATION OF POVERTY

The poor just can't catch a break

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The poor people seem to get no respite from crises.

Over two years of coronavirus restrictions rendered many of them unemployed while many others saw their income drastically fall.

A survey by the Power and Participation Research Centre (PPRC) and the Brac Institute of Governance and Development (BIGD) in April last year found that the economic shock of the pandemic pushed an estimated 2.45 crore people into poverty.

Just when they began to eke out a living, the war in Ukraine started in February this year. It caused global supply chain disruptions that resulted in food inflation.

Food prices have been rising for months, and in recent weeks, the prices jumped upwards. It became utterly difficult for poor people to make ends meet after the government in August raised fuel prices that had a ripple effect on transport costs and the market of daily essentials.

Against this backdrop, the country today is observing the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty.

Inflation reached 9.52 percent, a 10-year high, in August before coming down slightly

to 9.1 percent in September.

Tafura Begum, a widow in Rayer Bazar slum, said she had to provide for her two children and elderly mother with just Tk 10,000 she earned a month by working as a house staff. She has to pay Tk 3,000 for rent and make do with the remaining money.

"Things were a bit better only six months ago. The daily essentials are becoming unaffordable. We eat only rice and potatoes on most days because vegetables are too

"We now eat only rice and some cheap vegetables. We have stopped purchasing each and every non-essential item. I reduced buying medicines for my ailing father."

expensive," she said, adding that buying meat and fish was unimaginable for her.

"I can only afford to feed eggs to my children once a week," she said.

Abdur Rashid, who sells cucumbers by the road in Farmgate, said his family members were also changing their eating habits.

"We now eat only rice and some cheap

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Info secy sent on retirement in 'public interest'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Information and broadcasting ministry's secretary Mokbul Hossain was sent into retirement in "public interest" grounds yesterday.

The public administration ministry issued a circular that read he was sent into retirement under Section 45 of Bangladesh Service Rules 2018.

If the president approves, the government can send an employee, who has completed 25 years of service, into retirement on public interest grounds, according to the section.

Mokbul joined as the secretary of the information and broadcasting ministry on May 31, 2021.

Earlier, he worked as a registrar at the office of Joint Stock Companies and Firms. He also worked as an

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products to Bangladesh.

The agreement came during the delegation-level meeting led by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and Brunei Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah at the Prime Minister's Office yesterday.

The development comes at a time when Bangladesh is looking for alternative sources of energy amid the spike in fuel prices and supply chain disruptions in the wake of the Russia-Ukraine war.

"Prime Minister Hasina sought Brunei's support in the energy sector in the development journey of Bangladesh. The Sultan happily agreed," an official present at the meeting told this correspondent.

An MoU signed earlier on the supply of LNG and other petroleum products has also been renewed.

"The MoU, which was inactive, can now be activated for importing energy from Brunei," the official said.

The two countries also agreed to boost maritime connectivity, which can help lower the transport cost of energy and increase trade, he said.

The Brunei sultan leading a 40-strong delegation of his family members, senior ministers and officials arrived in Dhaka on Saturday.

This is the first-ever state visit by the sultan at the invitation of President Md Abdul Hamid and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. Earlier in 2019, Hasina visited Brunei.

Red carpet was rolled out and a 21-gun salute was given in honour of Hassanal Bolkiah upon his arrival on Saturday.

He attended a banquet hosted by President Abdul Hamid at the Bangabhaban, and a cultural event the same day. He also held a meeting with President Hamid there.

Besides, Foreign Minister Abdul Momen called on the Sultan at hotel InterContinental Dhaka.

The sultan also visited the National Martyrs Memorial in Savar and Bangabandhu Memorial Museum at Dhanmondi and paid respect to the memories of Bangabandhu and the martyrs of 1971.

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EASING STRAIN ON RESERVES Dhaka looks to secure \$5.5b from IMF, WB

REJAUL KARIM BYRON

Bangladesh is hoping to get \$5.5 billion from the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank as budget support, which will help the country shore up its depleting foreign currency reserves.

"We believe if we get the loans, our dollar crisis will be over," Bangladesh Bank Governor Abdur Rouf Talukder told reporters in Washington DC on Saturday after a series of meetings with officials of the two multilateral lenders.

Dhaka requested the lenders for the funds to better manage fiscal, monetary and financial stability risks amid the Russia-Ukraine war and also to tackle the climate challenges.

The BB governor said there had been discussions for securing loans of \$4.5 billion from the IMF and \$1 billion from the WB as budget support.

"As per our quota, we can take \$7 billion from the IMF. But we plan to take \$4.5 billion and have discussed it with the IMF officials," said Rouf.

He further said the loan has been sought from the IMF's Resilience and Sustainability Trust (RST) funds, created recently to help countries build resilience to external shocks and ensure sustainable growth.

"The IMF guidelines, however, stipulate that if you ask for loans from one of its components, you will have to take funds from its other components as well," he said, adding that Bangladesh also sought loans from the IMF's Extended Credit Facility (ECF) and Extended Fund Facility (EFF).

The BB governor said they also had talks with the WB to get \$1 billion loan - \$250 million from the Development

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Namibia players celebrate the Sri Lanka skipper Dasun Shanaka's prized wicket during their 55-run win in the T20 World Cup opener in Geelong yesterday. Sri Lanka were bundled out for 108 after Namibia posted 163 for seven.

PHOTO: ICC

A stunning start

AGENCIES

Sri Lanka's T20 World Cup campaign got off to a disastrous start on Sunday as the former champions crashed to a 55-run defeat by Namibia in Geelong.

Arriving as surprise Asia Cup champions, Sri Lanka had hoped to make an early statement against the African associate side in front of thousands of expectant supporters on a sun-bathed afternoon at Kardinia Park.

Instead, it was Namibia soaking up their finest international win a year after storming into the Super 12s at the last World Cup in the United Arab Emirates.

Bowled out for 108 after chasing 164 for victory, the 2014 champions Sri Lanka can afford no slip-ups in their qualifying matches against United Arab Emirates on Tuesday and the Netherlands on Thursday.

All-rounder Jan Frylinck was man-of-the-match, top-scoring with 44 from 28 balls as Namibia put on a respectable total on a drop-in wicket.

He then picked up the

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