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130-KM INDO-BANGLA PIPELINE

# It's likely to be ready by next month

**OUR CORRESPONDENT,** New Delhi

The much-awaited 130-km India-Bangladesh Friendship Pipeline (IBFPL) is likely to be in commission by next month, according to Indian officials.

The Rs 337.08 crore (around Tk 475cr) pipeline will carry fuel from state-owned Numaligarh Refinery Ltd's (NRL) marketing terminal in Siliguri of West Bengal to the Parbatipur depot of Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation

The mechanical work of the bilateral project, being funded by India, was completed on December 12 last year, a senior official of NRL told PTI on condition of anonymity, reports our New Delhi correspondent.

The ceremony for the IBFPL was held in September  $2018\,\mathrm{in}$  the presence of the prime ministers of Bangladesh and India through video conferencing.

"The project is in a true sense an engineering marvel. We faced lots of hurdles but with mutual cooperation and technological understanding between the two countries, this international project will see the light of the day," another senior executive of the refinery said.

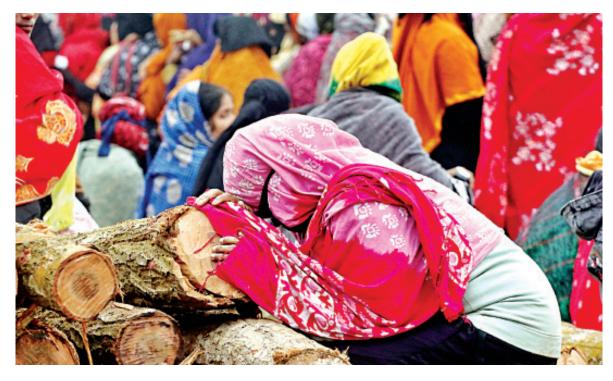
The pipeline project has been successfully implemented because of the true friendship between India and Bangladesh, and it will remain a testimony of the best relationship between them, the official added.

It was in 2017 that Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Bangladesh counterpart Sheikh Hasina agreed to finance this pipeline with a capacity of one million tonnes per annum.

The total project cost for the construction of the IBFPL is Rs 377.08 crore (around Tk 475cr). Out of this, NRL's investment is Rs 91.84 crore (around Tk 115cr) for the India portion of the pipeline, while the remaining Rs 285.24 crore (around Tk 360cr) for the Bangladesh portion is being funded by the Indian government as a grant-in-aid.

According to a recent report, prepared by the Assam legislative assembly on the visit of a delegation of the legislators to the neighbouring country, Bangladesh will start importing fuel oil from NRL later this year.

NRL and BPC had in April 2017 inked a long-term agreement for selling high-speed diesel from India to SEE PAGE 6 COL 2



Seema Begum, 51, had fallen asleep on a pile of logs while waiting for an OMS truck in the capital's Jatrabari yesterday. She went there at 6:00am, despite a recent eye surgery, to collect rice at subsidised prices to feed her family of three. When she awoke at 11:00am, around a 100 people were ahead of her in line, which meant she would not get her share of the staple food. Though she repeatedly asked others for help and explained that she has been ill, no one came to her aid. PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

#### **COLD SNAP ACROSS COUNTRY**

## Transport services disrupted

STAR REPORT

bone-chilling cold, accompanied by thick fog, continued to batter normal life across the country yesterday, communication, and causing immense public suffering.

Eight flights were diverted and seven were delayed due to dense fog at Dhaka's Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport early in the morning.

Of the eight flights, seven were

They started returning to Dhaka airport as the visibility started improving after 8:15am.

Flight operations started getting disrupted at 12:00am as pilots could disrupting road, air, and river not see the runway before landing due to zero visibility, sources at the HSIA said.

As a result, flights of Batik Air from Kuala Lumpur; Kuwait Airways and Jazeera Airways from Kuwait; US-Bangla Airlines from Dubai; Biman Bangladesh Airlines from Dammam; Gulf Air from Bahrain; diverted to Kolkata and one to and Salam Air from Muscat were

diverted to Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose International Airport in Kolkata, while an Air Asia flight was diverted to Yangon.

Dhaka-bound flight from Jeddah was also cancelled.

Adding to that, around a dozen Dhaka-bound flights could not land on schedule during this period.

Meanwhile, poor visibility also disrupted ferry movement on the Paturia-Daulatdia route for around 10 hours and on Aricha-Kazirhat route for around 11 hours.

later resumed The services SEE PAGE 6 COL 3

### Politicians failed to make politics appealing

Says Quader

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Politicians have failed to make politics appealing to honest and talented people and that is why they are not in politics these days, Awami League General Secretary Obaidul Quader said yesterday.

"We, who do politics, are responsible for this failure. It has to be acknowledged," he said while addressing the Jatiya Party (Manju) triennial council at the Engineers' Institute auditorium in

He urged the party leaders and activists to prepare for the next election and said, "The final game will be in January next year."

Stating that student politics lost its reputation, he said, "Politics will lose its character without the participation of good, honest, and bright individuals. Good people are not in politics these days. We have failed to make politics appealing."

Noting that democracy is crucial in saving

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

#### Webb reveals Milky Way-like young galaxies

INDEPENDENT.CO.UK

Nasa's James Webb Space Telescope has helped astronomers discover Milky Way-like galaxies dating from billions of years ago. The discovery of these young galaxies -- which have stellar bars, elongated features of stars stretching from the centres of galaxies into their outer disks -- could help refine theories about the evolution of the cosmos, say

SEE PAGE 6 COL 6



The Roads and Highways Department tears down an illegal shop beside the Dhaka-Pabna highway in Pabna town. Officials said they demolished almost 100 shops yesterday and such raids would continue for nine more days to free the road and reduce traffic congestion.

#### They shouldn't comment about Bangladesh polls

Says Momen in reply to journo's query on US official's statement

STAR REPORT

Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen said talking about vesterday Bangladesh's elections does not suit those whose own elections are questionable.

"Seventy-two percent of the people in the USA think that democracy there is very weak. And 77 percent of the Republicans there think that votes were stolen in their last election. In our country, only a handful of people believe like that," he said.

He made this remark during the inauguration of six electronic gates at the Sylhet Osmani International Airport when journalists asked about the statement made by US State Department Spokesperson Ned Price on Saturday, reports our Sylhet correspondent.

At a briefing in Washington, SEE PAGE 6 COL 4

#### 'Ceasefire' ends in Ukraine

Russia bombs regions in east Ukraine, vows to press ahead with offensive until victory

AGENCIES

Russia's bombing of regions in eastern Ukraine killed at least two people overnight, local officials said yesterday, after Moscow ended a selfdeclared Christmas ceasefire and vowed to push on with combat until it reaches a victory over its neighbour.

Russian President Vladimir Putin ordered a 36-hour ceasefire along the line of contact from Friday at midday to observe Russia and Ukraine's Orthodox Christmas, which fell on Saturday.

Ukraine rejected the truce, and the general staff of Ukraine's armed forces said Russian troops had shelled dozens of positions and settlements along the front line on Saturday. A 50-year-old man died in the northeastern region of Kharkiv as a

result of Russia's shelling overnight, Oleh Synehubov, the governor of the region, said on the Telegram messaging app. The news came minutes after midnight in Moscow. One person was killed in another attack overnight on Soledar in the eastern Donetsk region, local officials said.

Most Ukrainian Orthodox Christians have traditionally celebrated Christmas on January 7, as have Orthodox Christians in Russia. But this year, the Orthodox Church of Ukraine, the country's largest, allowed also for a December 25 celebration. Still, many observed the holiday on Saturday, flocking into churches and cathedrals.

The Kremlin said Moscow will press ahead with what it calls a "special military operation" in Ukraine, reports Reuters.

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