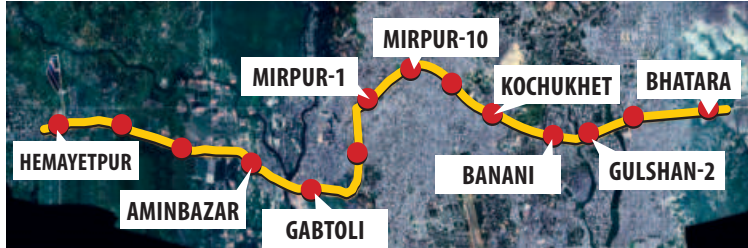




## MRT-5 NORTHERN ROUTE ALIGNMENT

# RHD, metro rail authority at odds



TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

The metro rail authorities and the Roads and Highways Department are in a tussle over the route alignment of MRT-5 (north), physical work on which is expected to start in July.

The RHD has lodged reservations over the proposed alignment between Hemayetpur and Aminbazar as the rail line will "frustrate" its Dhaka-Aricha highway development plan.

The metro rail authorities, Dhaka Mass Transit Company Ltd (DMTCL), had to stop some work, including tests, along the road following the RHD's objection last year.

Road Transport and Highways Division held meetings with the RHD and the DMTCL and officials of both agencies visited the site together but could not find a solution, raising questions about the work getting started on time and subsequently MRT-5 meeting its 2028 deadline.

The 20km rail line with 14 stations is supposed to connect Hemayetpur and Bhatara via Gabtoli, Mirpur, and Gulshan at a cost of Tk 41,239 crore.

The 5.6km section, from Hemayetpur to Aminbazar, will be elevated while a 13.5km section from Gabtoli to Natunbazar will be underground. The remaining 0.9km will be elevated.

The DMTCL in June 2020 hired a consortium led by Japanese Nippon Koei Co Ltd to prepare the detailed design, 70 percent work of which has been completed.

The Dhaka-Aricha highway mainly links the capital with the north and some districts in the south. The RHD is spending Tk 696 crore to build dedicated service lanes and bus bays at major bus stops and market areas between Gabtoli and Paturia Ferry Terminal.

Over a decade ago, the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs had also given the go-ahead to turn the highway, up to Nabinagar, into an expressway. The feasibility study for the project was done in 2021.

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Local resident Larisa places flowers on the grave of her husband, a Ukrainian service member killed in a fight against Russian troops, at a cemetery in the town of Bucha, outside Kyiv, yesterday as Ukraine marked the first anniversary of the Russian invasion.

PHOTO: REUTERS

## 'Ukraine suffered unimaginably'

### World marks first anniv of Russia's invasion; US, UK impose new sanctions

AGENCIES

Ukrainians and leaders of many democracies yesterday marked the first anniversary of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, while Russia said its forces were making gains in battle in the east.

Ukrainians paid tribute to fallen loved ones and vowed to fight on to victory. At a ceremony on Kyiv's St Sophia Square, a visibly emotional President Volodymyr Zelensky bestowed medals on soldiers and the mother of one killed. He fought back tears when a band played the national anthem.

Leaders around the world weighed in on the one-year anniversary of the invasion, the large majority pledging firm support to Kyiv despite Moscow's defiance.

Britain's King Charles III condemned Russia's "unprovoked full-scale attack" on Ukraine. "It has now been a year that the people of Ukraine have suffered

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## DEBATE IF KHALEDA CAN DO POLITICS

# Her health more pressing question

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA

Amid conflicting statements from ministers over the legality of BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia getting involved in politics, a more pressing question comes to the fore: whether she is physically fit enough to become active in politics.

According to physicians and BNP sources, the condition of the

77-year-old former prime minister can deteriorate anytime while treatment for her liver cirrhosis and various other ailments continues.

She suffered a heart attack last year and a stent was placed in her heart. She has low haemoglobin, diabetes and chronic kidney disease.

Party leaders, however, said there is an ill motive behind the ministers'

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Eminent artist Rafiqun Nabi gives a child his first lesson on letters, widely known as Hate Khori, at a programme at the Central Shaheed Minar yesterday. Sitting next to him is famed TV producer Nawazish Ali Khan. Karok Natya Sampradaya organised the event to pay tributes to Language Movement martyrs.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

## Man stabbed to death in front of his wife, kids

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A man was stabbed to death by some muggers in front of his wife and children in Savar early today, police said.

Dipak Chandra Saha, officer-in-charge of Savar Model Police Station, said the deceased Sohel Mia, 26, arrived at Savar from his village home in Rangpur by bus around 6:00am. His wife and two children were accompanying him.

As soon as they got off the bus, unidentified muggers targeted them in Rajalakh Farm area near the bus stand and tried to snatch money and cellphones, said the OC, quoting Sohel's family members.

When Sohel resisted, the muggers stabbed him indiscriminately and fled the scene.

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## AL MEN IN CASINO BUSINESS Back into action in party politics

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A section of leaders of the Awami League and its associate bodies, whose names came up in the investigation of illegal casino business, seem to have become active in politics again ahead of the next general election.

Although they are yet to be reinstated to their previous political posts, they are carrying out political activities secretly and lobbying top AL leaders to regain their ground in politics.

The government on September 18, 2019, launched the much-talked about crackdown on gambling, extortion, land grabbing, and some other forms of corruption with raids at five sporting clubs.

After a series of raids, more than 250 people, including at least 11 leaders of different organisations affiliated with the ruling AL, were arrested.

During the anti-casino drive, names of then Jubo League chairman Omar Farooq Chowdhury and Swecchasebak League president Molla Md Abu Kausar

came up as the main patrons of those directly involved in the casino business.

The two were later relieved of their party posts.

AL sources said Omar Farooq is now inactive in politics while Abu Kausar is seen occasionally at the AL chief's Dhanmondi political office.

On the first day of the drive, Rab arrested Dhaka South City Jubo League's then organising secretary Khaled Mahmud Bhuiyan for running a "casino" at a football club in the capital's Fakirerpool.

Later, allegations surfaced that the president of the Jubo League's same unit, Ismail Hossain Chowdhury Samrat, was behind the casino business in Dhaka.

Samrat was also arrested on October 6, 2019. The two were expelled from the organisation.

Samrat walked out of jail on bail in August last year while Khaled was released in September, but none of them were reinstated to their political posts.

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## WE DEEPLY MOURN

THIS IRREPLACEABLE LOSS

**Mohammed Ali Pasha**  
(1955-2023)  
Eminent Industrialist  
Co-Founder & Vice-Chairman, Shun Shing Group  
Managing Director, Seven Rings Cement