



Introduce sewage system across country

PM tells authorities, inaugurates South Asia's largest STP in Dasherbandi

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday asked authorities concerned to introduce water purification and sewage system in all divisional cities, districts, upazilas and union level in phases.

"For this you have to formulate a master plan. And preparing the same model, if we can select the places and start the construction work... we will

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A boy fights dengue at Mugda Medical College and Hospital, his hopeful eyes showing his strength. The cannula attached to his hand is a stark reminder of the severity of the situation, but it does not deter him. In a grim trend over the last few days, the number of child dengue patients has shot up in hospitals across the capital. With 1,239 more patients hospitalised with dengue during the 24 hours till yesterday morning, the total number of cases crossed 17,000.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

Determined to hold free, fair polls

President tells outgoing Denmark ambassador

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh is determined to hold a free and fair election. For this purpose, the Election Commission will be given all possible support, said President Mohammed Shahabuddin yesterday.

He made the remarks at a meeting with Denmark Ambassador Winnie Estrup Petersen at Bangabhaban.

President's Press Secretary Md Joynal Abedin briefed journalists after the meeting. The outgoing ambassador expressed her gratitude to the president for providing overall cooperation in fulfilling her duties. The president called upon all to work together to tackle the adverse effects of climate change.

Thanking Denmark for its cooperation on the Rohingya issue, the president hoped that international community would continue to put pressure on Myanmar.

The envoy said Denmark will continue its cooperation with Bangladesh.

PRAYER
TIMING

JULY 14

Fazr	Juma	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN 4:10	12:30	5:00	6:55	8:17
JAMAAAT 4:45	1:15	5:15	7:00	8:45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

DHAKA-CHATTOGRAM HIGHWAY

Maintenance work to take more time, more money

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

The road authorities have to spend more resources, including money and time, to keep the Dhaka-Chattogram Highway operational, thanks to its delayed maintenance works and rutting caused by continuous overloaded plying of vehicles.

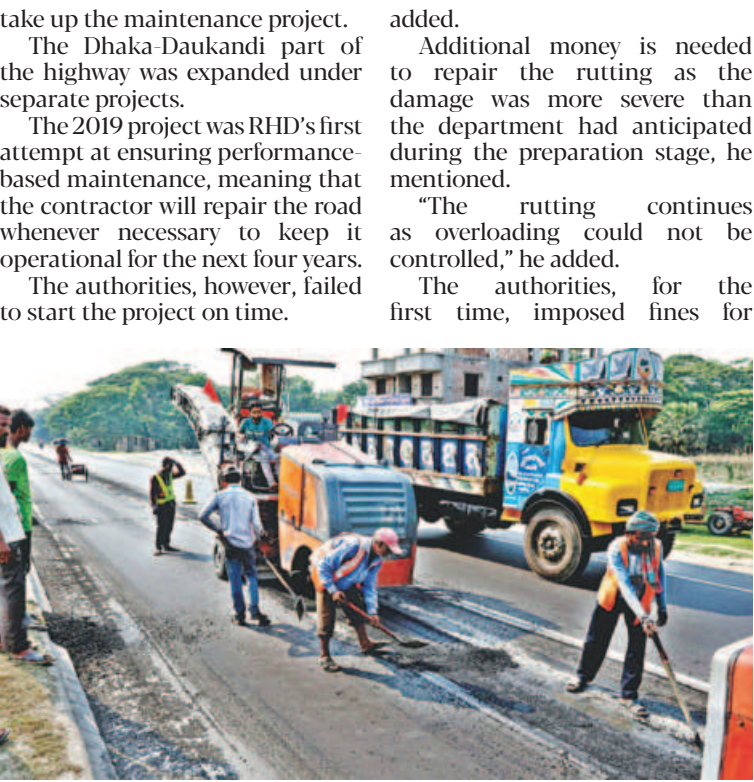
Roads and Highways Department (RHD) has sought two more years and Tk 189 crore more for implementing a Tk 793.14 crore project, initiated in 2019 and slated to be completed by June this year, for strengthening the road and keeping it operational, said officials.

The revision, if approved, will take the total project cost to Tk 982 crore and the deadline to June 2025. The proposal is currently pending at the Planning Commission, they added.

This highway is considered the economic lifeline of the country, as over 90 percent of Bangladesh's foreign trade depends on Chattogram Port and the current four-lane Dhaka-Chattogram Highway.

However, indecision, shortsightedness, and piecemeal measures have plagued the road's upgrade for a long time.

The department had completed a project in 2016 to expand the highway from Cumilla's Daudkandi to Chattogram. Nevertheless, the road developed ruts within the next couple of years due to overload and poor traffic forecast, forcing the authorities to



take up the maintenance project.

The Dhaka-Daukandi part of the highway was expanded under separate projects.

The 2019 project was RHD's first attempt at ensuring performance-based maintenance, meaning that the contractor will repair the road whenever necessary to keep it operational for the next four years.

The authorities, however, failed to start the project on time.

Additional money is needed to repair the rutting as the damage was more severe than the department had anticipated during the preparation stage, he mentioned.

"The rutting continues as overloading could not be controlled," he added.

The authorities, for the first time, imposed fines for

overloading in August 2016. However, protesting transport owners and workers damaged the weighbridges in Manikganj and Chattogram on the first day.

This compelled the authorities to increase the maximum weight limit of goods-laden vehicles in November 2017.

Currently, two of three weighbridges are operational at two points on the highway.

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CASE AGAINST PROF YUNUS

Labour court to record depositions on July 23

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A labour court in Dhaka yesterday set July 23 for recording depositions in a case filed against Nobel laureate Prof Muhammad Yunus, also chairman of Grameen Telecom, and its three other top officials for violating labour laws.

Sheikh Merina Sultana, chairman of the Third Labour Court of Dhaka, passed the order after defence lawyers for Yunus and three others submitted petitions, seeking an adjournment of the hearing.

Meantime, the complainant yesterday appeared before it to narrate what he knew about the incident, said bench assistant Mohammad Nuruzzaman.

Earlier on June 6, the court exempted Yunus and Ashrafur Hasan, managing director of Grameen Telecom, from their personal appearance, and their lawyers represented them at the court yesterday.

Two others -- Nur Jahan Begum and Mohammad Shahjahan -- also directors of Grameen Telecom, were present at the court.

On June 6, the court framed charges against

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ARREST OF CITIZENS

What's the difficulty in informing family members, asks SC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The police should not have any problem in informing family members following an arrest, said the Supreme Court yesterday.

It also asked the police, magistrates and judges concerned what is the difficulty in conveying the family members about the arrest.

Besides, the law enforcers should not have any objection in making a memorandum of arrest, including taking signatures of arrestees and conveying their families about detention.

All this should be done for the sake of transparency, the SC told the attorney general while hearing a review petition.

Attorney General AM Amin Uddin told the court that there is no provision of law in making memorandum of arrest after detaining people.

A seven-member bench of the Appellate Division headed by Chief Justice Hasan Foez Siddique was holding hearing of the review petition filed by the government challenging its 2016 judgement.

It upheld the 2003 High Court verdict against the arbitrary exercise of power by law enforcers using few sections of the CrPC, including section 54.

Section 54 empowers police to arrest anyone on mere suspicion. Under several other sections of the criminal law, arrestees are placed on remand and detained in violation of their fundamental rights to protection of life and liberty, it said.

BNP unveils 31-point outline to 'rebuild' state

Canadian envoy calls on party

STAR REPORT

A day after announcing its one-point demand, BNP yesterday unveiled a 31-point outline aimed at "reforming" the constitution and state system and ensuring economic emancipation.

Party's Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul presented the outline at a press conference at the BNP chairperson's Gulshan office, reports UNB.

"As a responsible political party, we -- through discussions with other parties who are carrying out movements with us -- formulated this outline. On behalf of BNP, I want to present it before the nation," he said.

We're now announcing our 31-point outline, not just for the election and regime change, but for overall qualitative change in the state system and turning the country into a democratic state in the true sense.

The BNP leader said they announced the one-point demand from their Wednesday rally in the capital for a political changeover. "We're now announcing our 31-point outline, not just for the election and for regime change, but for overall qualitative change in the state system and turning the country into a democratic state in the true sense."

He said this outline is "crucial" for the nation, as it contains their party's commitments to bringing positive change to the country.

The BNP leader said Bangladesh was formed with the dream of establishing democracy, equality, human dignity, and social justice through the Liberation War in 1971. "They (people)

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DHAKA-17 BY-POLLS

Slum dwellers to be a key factor

SHAHEEN MOLLAH and ASHIK ABDULLAH APU

In absence of BNP, the Dhaka 17 by-polls scheduled for July 17, is shaping up to be a two-horse race between the ruling Awami League candidate, Muhammad A Arafat, and independent candidate Ashraful Hossain alias Hero Alom.

However, Alom's presence in the electioneering campaign has been thin.

Meanwhile, Arafat, has been on a hectic campaign trail, meeting with voters and addressing rallies. Besides, candidates of the Jatiya Party and Jaker Party also have a significant presence on the campaigning field.

In addition to the elite population of Gulshan, Banani, and Cantonment, the Dhaka-17 constituency also encompasses several large slums, including the Karail slum, which serves as the largest home for marginalised people in the country.

According to the EC, the total number of voters in the Dhaka-17 constituency is 325,018, with a significant portion being marginalised voters.

The Bhashantek slum is home to nearly 30,000 voters, while Karail and Sattala slums have also over 25,000 voters each.

As per locals, these slum dwellers will

significantly influence the outcome of the upcoming by-polls, and Hero Alom has a solid supporter base in those areas.

Besides, some of them believe that BNP activists might show up on the polling day and vote for Alom to defeat the ruling party candidate.

Talking to The Daily Star, Zahirul Islam, councillor of ward 15, said, "Of the total cast votes (in ward 15 during city polls), over 80 percent votes were cast by the slum dwellers. Generally, they are more enthusiastic about voting than others."

However, Alom's lacklustre campaigning in the slums could cost him votes.

During a visit to the Bhashantek, Karail and Sattala slums yesterday, it was seen that the streets were flooded with posters of Arafat while not a single poster or banner of Hero Alom could be seen.

Locals in the slums said Hero Alom visited their area only once while the supporters of ruling party contender have been campaigning in full swing.

While talking to this newspaper, Hero Alom said his supporters put up some posters but those were allegedly torn by miscreants.

Meanwhile, the supporters of AL

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A pedestrian struggles to find his way ahead among illegally-queued bikes on a footpath near the capital's Banglamotor intersection yesterday. This scenario is common in the area as the authorities seldom take measures to address the issue.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN