



DHAKA TUESDAY JULY 18, 2023

REGD. No. DA 781

VOL. XXXIII No. 177

SRABAN 3, 1430 BS

www.thedailystar.net

ZILHAJ 29, 1444 HJRI

20 PAGES PLUS LIFESTYLE : Tk 15.00

A MEGA LEAP for transport

Govt to open 7 projects in Sept-Oct; AL to showcase them in campaign for general elections; expert urges building capacity for operations



DHAKA ELEVATED EXPRESSWAY (PARTIAL)

Possible opening in September
TOTAL COST: Tk **13,857.57** crore
DURATION: July 2011-June 2024



METRO RAIL (MRT-6 SECOND PHASE)

Possible opening in late October
TOTAL COST: Tk **33,472** crore
DURATION: July 2012-Dec 2025



BANGABANDHU TUNNEL

Possible opening in September
TOTAL COST: Tk **10,690** crore
DURATION: Nov 2015-Dec 2023



DHAKA-BHANGA-JASHORE RAIL LINE (PARTIAL)

Possible opening in September
TOTAL COST: Tk **39,246.80** crore
DURATION: Jan 2016-June 2024



DHAKA AIRPORT'S THIRD TERMINAL (PARTIAL)

Possible opening in October
TOTAL COST: Tk **21,399** crore
DURATION: July 2016-June 2025



CHATTOGRAM-COX'S BAZAR RAIL LINE

Possible opening in late September or early October
TOTAL COST: Tk **18,034.48** crore
DURATION: July 2010-Jun 2024



KHULNA-MONGLA RAIL LINE

Possible opening in September
TOTAL COST: Tk **4,260.88** crore
DURATION: Dec 2010-Oct 2024

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

Transport in Bangladesh is going to have a huge boost when seven mega projects open to the public in the next two to three months.

The projects include the country's first underwater tunnel and elevated expressway.

The Dhaka-Bhanga and Khulna-Mongla rail lines, the Bangabandhu Tunnel under the Karnaphuli, and a major part of the Dhaka Elevated Expressway are expected to open in September.

The Chattogram-Cox's Bazar rail line would be opened either in late September or early October.

In October, the opening of the second phase of metro rail line-6 (from Agargaon to Motijheel) and the partial launch of the third terminal of Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport are expected.

All these are opening just months before the national election, and the ruling party is sure to showcase these across the country as evidence of its achievements.

However, not all of them will

be fully functional on launch day as some work, including hiring manpower to run them, will remain incomplete. The three rail projects require over 3,000 employees and none of them have been hired yet.

Sources claim that the project authorities picked the time for the openings based on two things. They wanted to avoid August as the Awami League stays away from celebrations in the month of national mourning. They did not want to leave it too late since an election-time government may have a small cabinet.

The projects will significantly enhance transport and communications.

Transport expert Prof Hadiuzzaman said once these projects are opened, the country's capacity to transport people and goods will multiply. They will ultimately reduce cost and travel time.

Cost and deadline overruns in most of the projects wasted public money, but the projects will deliver economic and financial benefits for a long time, he said.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

AL, BNP to march city streets today, tomorrow

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

With the national polls around six months away, the Awami League and the BNP are going to hold programmes and counter-programmes today and tomorrow to show off their strength on the streets.

The BNP will today march from Gabtoli to Jatrahari from 10:00am to 4:00pm in the capital and bring out processions in other cities and districts to realise its one-point demand for polls under a non-party interim government.

Sources in the BNP said instructions were given to all Dhaka north and South city units to ensure huge gatherings.

To counter BNP's programme, ruling Awami League will bring out what it termed "a march for peace and development" in the capital.

At 3:00pm today, Dhaka city (South) AL will bring out a procession from Institution of Engineers, Bangladesh, that will end at Dhanmondi 32. AL General Secretary Obaidul Quader will join the programme.

The unit is planning to gather over a lakh people in the event.

Besides, all city and districts units under Rajshahi, Chattogram, Barishal and Sylhet will bring out processions on the same time.

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Hero Alom, an independent candidate in the Dhaka-17 by-polls, was assaulted by some people wearing AL's electoral badges while visiting the Bidyaniketan School and College polling centre in the capital's Banani yesterday afternoon. PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

Attack on Hero Alom, 12pc turnout mark Arafat's win

STAR REPORT

Awami League candidate Mohammad Ali Arafat won the Dhaka-17 by-election yesterday which was marred by an attack on independent runner Hero Alom and a few stray incidents of irregularities.

Arafat bagged 28,816 votes and his nearest contestant, independent Ashraf Hossain Alom, widely known as Hero Alom, secured 5,609, said Returning Officer Monir Hossain Khan while announcing the unofficial results around 9:00pm.

The turnout was 11.51 percent.



Mohammad Ali Arafat

Six other candidates, including main opposition Jatiya Party's Sikdar Anisur Rahman, lost their security deposits as they failed to bag one-eighth of the total ballots cast.

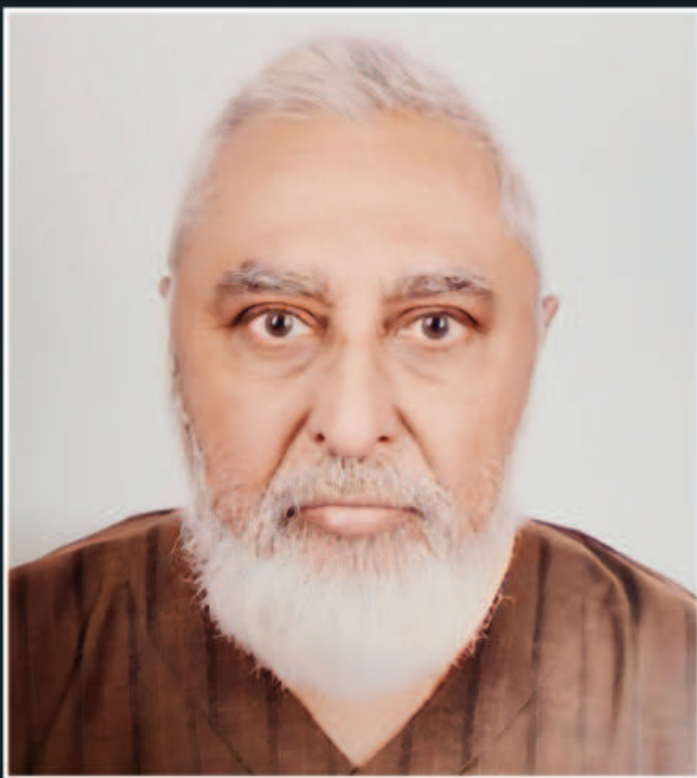
Fake votes were cast in at least one polling centre while "dummy polling agents" were there in many others. Many agents couldn't even tell for

whom they were working.

Halfway through the polling, independent candidate Md Tarikul Islam announced quitting the by-election alleging that there was no environment

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We Deeply Mourn



Mahmud Hossain Choudhury

18 March 1939 – 13 July 2023

ONE Bank Family deeply mourns the sad demise of Mr. Mahmud Hossain Choudhury, First Chairman of ONE Bank Limited. He breathed his last on Thursday, 13 July, 2023 (Inna Lillahi Wa Inna Ilaihi Razi'un. Truly, to Allah we belong and truly to Him we shall return).

Mr. Mahmud Hossain Choudhury secured First-Class First position in B.Sc. (Engineering) from Ahsanullah Engineering College, now known as BUET, in 1960. He pursued a very colorful career in Bangladesh's Telecommunications sector and retired as the Chairman of the TNT Board in 1997. His Extraordinary Role earned him prestigious "Sher-e- Bangla Award" and "Deshbandhu Award." He embodied wisdom and resilience. He was an avid reader of diverse genres with a particular fondness for detective stories and novels.

We pray for the salvation of the departed soul. We also extend profound condolence to the bereaved family and remember him with much honor and fondness.



ONE Bank
LIMITED

BUSINESS

Will Bangladesh benefit from trade in rupee?

Bangladesh and India began settling cross-border trades in the Indian rupee last week, a development that has been hailed as a landmark for the growing bilateral commerce.

Initially, the scope of making import payments would be limited to the equivalent of Bangladesh's export earnings of around \$2 billion from India. This means it might not immediately provide a fillip to Bangladesh's foreign currency reserve, whose level fell by about 30 percent in the past one year owing to higher import bills against lower-than-expected export and remittance earnings.

STORY ON B1

11 districts get new SPs ahead of polls

Eight of them first-timer in the role

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Eleven districts got new superintendents of police yesterday, just around six months before the national election.

Eight of them have been appointed as SPs for the first time, while SPs of three districts have been transferred.

The home ministry issued a notification in this regard.

In another notification, the ministry transferred 13 SP-ranked officers, including the SPs of the 11 districts, to different units. Last month, 13 districts got new SPs.

Earlier this month, the government appointed new deputy commissioners in 28 districts.

The DCs of districts generally play the role of returning officers in the national polls, while SPs are responsible for ensuring law and order during and before the elections.

There are discussions in the political arena that the government is appointing their trusted officials ahead of the general election.

Sources said there will be more changes ahead of the polls.

As per the notifications, signed by Senior Assistant Secretary Md Mahabur Rahman Sheikh of the home ministry's Public Security Division, Special Superintendent of Police of Special Branch Md Azim-Ul-Ahsan has been appointed as Jhenidah SP, Assistant Inspector General Md Monzur Rahman of Police Headquarters Moulvibazar SP, Tourist Police SP Shaikat Shaheen Bandarban SP, SSP of Criminal Investigation Department Mukta Dhar Khagrachhari SP, DMP's Deputy Commissioner Uttam Prashad Pathak Thakurgaon SP, SSP of SBM Abul Kalam Azad Rajbari SP, DMP's DC Abul Hasnat Khan Bagerhat SP, and DMP's DC Mohammad Tarek Bin Rashid Laxmipur SP.

Besides, Bandarban SP Md Tariqul Islam has been transferred to Natore, Sherpur SP Md Kamruzzaman to Jamalpur, and Natore SP Md Saifur Rahman to Rajshahi district.

In a major reshuffle in the police force on Sunday, 16 deputy inspector generals and 35 additional deputy inspector generals were transferred.

There are discussions in the political arena that the government is appointing their trusted officials ahead of the general election.