

A new era in Dhaka commute

Hasina opens elevated expressway, says her govt not afraid of sanctions, threats

STAR REPORT

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday opened the country's first elevated expressway, which is expected to usher in a new era in Dhaka's commute by significantly cutting the travel time.

"This is a milestone in the communication sector. I have inaugurated the airport to Farmgate portion of Dhaka Elevated Expressway Project. Work on the remaining portions will be completed soon," she told a rally on the old trade fair ground at the capital's Agargaon after opening the 11.5km stretch of the much-awaited expressway.

The expressway is a gift to the people of Dhaka and across the country, the PM said, adding that it would play a great role in improving communications, report BSS and UNB.

"The expectations of the residents of Dhaka have been met with the opening of the expressway. The expressway will play a great role in reducing traffic jams significantly," she told the rally.

Before attending the rally, Hasina inaugurated the expressway around 3:30pm.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS INDUSTRY THRIVING ON MEGA PROJECTS; ELEVATED EXPRESSWAY TO SAVE TIME, COST - BI



Vehicles of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's motorcade on Dhaka Elevated Expressway yesterday. Hasina paid the toll, *inset*, at the airport end and inaugurated the expressway before travelling towards Farmgate.

PHOTO: PID/FOCUS BANGLA

How to get on, off the elevated expressway

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A part of the country's first ever elevated expressway is open to traffic since this morning.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina inaugurated it yesterday.

The Tejgaon-Bijoy Sarani overpass has been connected to the expressway through two ramps, both for entering the expressway.

One ramp is for vehicles heading towards Tejgaon, and the other for those going towards Bijoy Sarani.

There is another entry to the expressway in front of Banani Rail Station.

The expressway has an exit on Indira Road at Farmgate.

There are entries at Kawla near Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport, Progoti Sarani, and in front of the Army Golf Club on Airport Road.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 6

MAIN FEATURES

- TOTAL LENGTH **19.73km** (Airport to Kutubkhali)
- OPENED TO TRAFFIC **11.5km** (Airport to Farmgate)
- NUMBER OF RAMPS **31** (15 entry, 16 exit)
- CURRENTLY OPEN **13** ramps
- PROJECT COST **Tk 8,940cr**

TOLL RATES



Car, taxi, SUV, microbus, mini truck
Tk 80



Bus with 16 and more seats
Tk 160



Truck (6 wheels)
Tk 320



Truck (more than 6 wheels)
Tk 400

SPEED LIMIT

ON EXPRESSWAY
Maximum 60 km/hour

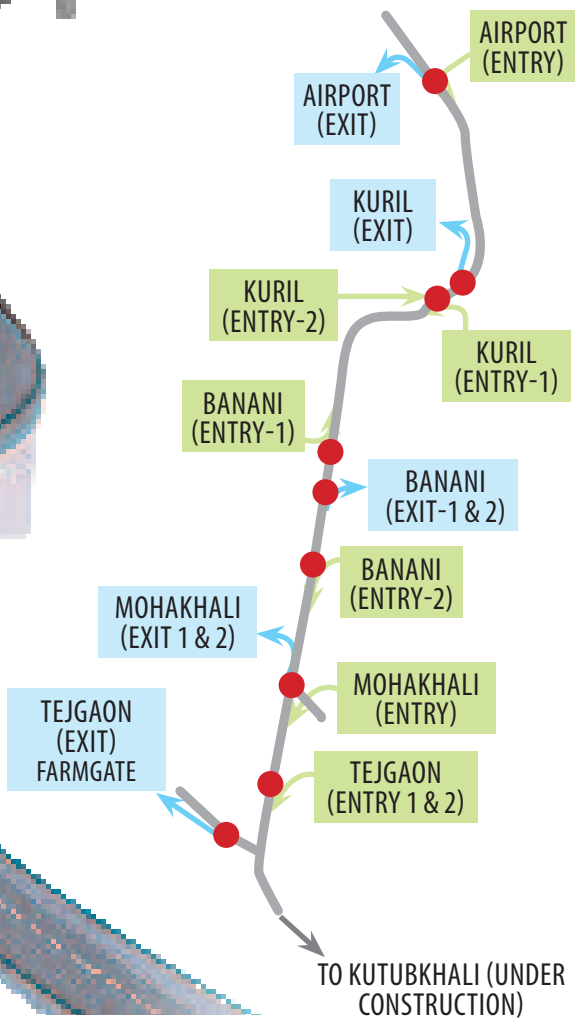
AT ENTRY/EXIT POINTS
Maximum 40 km/hour

NOT ALLOWED

Motorcycles and three-wheelers



ENTRY/EXIT RAMPS



National polls in January first week

Election Commissioner Anisur Rahman says

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The general elections will be held in the first week of January, although the exact date is yet to be determined, Election Commissioner Anisur Rahman yesterday said.

He made the comment while addressing the inauguration ceremony of the training of trainers for election officials at the Electoral Training Institute in the capital. Chief Election Commissioner Kazi Habibur Awal was the chief guest at the event.

The two-month long training for 3,500 election officials will end on November 30. These officials will then train about 900,000 field-level polling officials.

"With today's training, the formal process of the next parliamentary election has begun," Anisur said.

The current parliament expires on January He "But

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

3 major powers battling it out in Bangladesh

Say experts at seminar

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh and the entire South Asia region have become a battleground for three great powers, making it increasingly challenging for Dhaka to continue to balance its relations with the three, said a US-based foreign policy expert.

The tussle between India and China intensified with the Ladakh border clash, while the US is increasing its engagement with South Asian countries to ensure that they do not become completely dependent on Beijing, said Michael Kugelman, South Asia Institute director at the Wilson Centre, a Washington-based think-tank.

Kugelman's comment came at a seminar on Bangladesh's Indo-Pacific Outlook organised by the Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies yesterday.

He cited the case of the US-sanctioned Russian ship that was refused for offloading equipment for the Rooppur nuclear power plant in December last year after US objections, putting Bangladesh in a tricky spot.

Bangladesh has so far been making the balancing act, which was evident in its Indo-Pacific Outlook.

"But there could be tipping points that put Bangladesh's balancing policy to test."

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4

DENGUE OUTBREAK

Highest deaths in a day recorded

21 die from the disease; death toll now 618

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Twenty-one dengue patients died in the last 24 hours till 8:00am yesterday, the highest number of single-day casualties from the mosquito-borne disease in the country.

The total number of deaths from dengue fever now stands at 618.

Of the deceased, 19 were in Dhaka city hospitals, followed by one each in Mymensingh and Barishal, according to a press release from the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS).

Thirteen patients, however, were brought to Dhaka from outside the city, due to what experts said was a detection and treatment gap outside Dhaka.

During the same period, 2,352 dengue patients were admitted to hospitals, raising the total number of patients hospitalised this year to 1,27,694.

The dengue cases may continue to rise as the ongoing survey by the DGHS revealed a high density of Aedes mosquitoes in 79 wards of two city corporations in Dhaka city.

"Dengue cases and deaths may continue to be as high as they are now throughout September. Because, as of Friday, we found the Breteau index to be very high, around 20, in the majority of the wards surveyed in the last eight days."

Kabirul Bashar, entomologist and professor at Jahangirnagar University

"Dengue cases and deaths may continue to be as high as they are now throughout September. Because, as of Friday, we found the Breteau index (BI) to be very high—around 20—in the majority of the wards surveyed in the last eight days," Kabirul Bashar, an entomologist and professor at BI

SEE PAGE 6 COL 3

Must-win clash for Tigers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A meek surrender against Sri Lanka has Bangladesh pinned back to the wall as they lock horns with Afghanistan in their second and final Asia Cup group fixture at the Gaddafi Stadium in Lahore today.

The match is scheduled to begin at 3.30pm, as per Bangladesh Standard Time.

Shakib Al Hasan and Co face an added pressure of having to win by a large margin to boost their chances of advancing to the Super Four.

Just a win for the Tigers today could still do the trick, given Sri Lanka beat Afghanistan in their final group game. Or else, Bangladesh will see the equation come down to net run rate, which has been heavily dented by the big margin defeat in their first game.

Bangladesh had little time to regroup as they instantly had to head off to Lahore from Kandy following a five-wicket loss to co-hosts Sri Lanka.

Except for Najmul Hossain Shanto's 89-run knock, none of Bangladesh batters had an impact as the wheels



Rain forced a no-result in the blockbuster Asia Cup clash between India and Pakistan after just one innings of play on Saturday. Pakistan bowled out India for 266 in 48.5 overs with pace spearhead Shaheen Shah Afridi returning figures of 4-35, but no further play was possible due to persistent rain in Pallekele.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5