## SUPPLEMENT

## BANGABANDHU SHEIKH MUJIBUR RAHMAN TUNNEL

## PHOTOS: RAJIB RAIHAN The inauguration of South Asia's first underwater tunnel

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In a remarkable feat of engineering and vision, Bangladesh is set to unveil the Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Tunnel proudly. Spanning under the Karnaphuli River, it stands as the very first tunnel in Bangladesh's landscape and the first-ever under-river tunnel for road communication in South Asia. The journey of the tunnel commenced in 2016 and is being inaugurated today, the governments of Bangladesh on October 28, 2023, by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. Starting the next day, the tunnel will open for vehicular traffic.

It is truly transformative for its capacity to forge an alternative route, connecting Chattogram to the destinations of Cox's Bazar, Teknaf, and Matarbari. In doing so, it will reduce around 40 kilometers of the existing distance between these bustling hubs.

The main tunnel extends for 3.32 kilometers, featuring two four-lane tubes, each spanning Karnaphuli River.

2.45 kilometers. Complementing the tunnel's western and eastern termini, along with a 727-meter flyover at the Anwara end, are expected to elevate regional connectivity. The tunnel will allow vehicles to run at a maximum speed of 80 km. Impressively, the tunnel resides at depths ranging from 18 to 31 meters beneath the Karnaphuli River.

This project, supported by and China, received a total investment of Tk 10,689.71 crore. The Bangladesh government is providing BDT 4,619.70 crore in financing, with the remaining BDT 6,070.01 crore being funded by the Exim Bank of China. The China Communication and Construction Company Limited (CCCC) is responsible for the tunnel's construction. Bangladesh government envisions a 'One City Two Towns' concept, akin to Shanghai's, on both banks of the

GDP by 0.166%.

The Tunnel will yield the passage is the Karnaphuli Bridge cross the Shah Amanat Bridge textiles, this, two 5.35 km link roads at Financial and Economic Internal at Kalurghat, leading to increased Rates of Return (IRR) at 6.19% travel distances and exacerbated and 12.49%, respectively. It is traffic congestion. Travelers to forecasted to boost Bangladesh's Cox's Bazar face similar detours, compounding congestion woes,



The inception of the Karnafuli both intercity and intracity. But Tunnel will undoubtedly alleviate with the tunnel, movement across the traffic scene at the port city. Currently, connecting the banks travellers will be able to reach Cox's of Patenga and Anwara poses a Bazar and Bandarban swiftly. It underway formidable challenge. The only will also eliminate the need to

the river will become smooth, and

over the Karnafuli River.

be a key link for the Marine Drive Road from Chattogram to Cox's Bazar, unlocking tourism potential in South Chattogram and Cox's Bazar. It facilitates easy access to Anwara, ultimately enhancing the region's tourism appeal.

its vital maritime access to the Bay of Bengal, is essential for Chattogram Port, local industries, and the Bangladesh Navy. Building a tunnel was the only solution to preserve these crucial assets while addressing the city's transportation challenges.

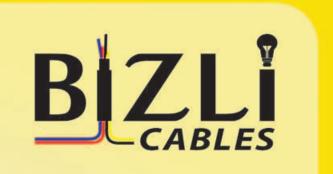
The tunnel is expected to provide support to the Korean EPZ and the under-construction China EPZ. Furthermore, several major industrial groups have secured land for future factory development. New efforts are to construct 80 industrial facilities, spanning

shipbuilding, food processing, steel, and cement, The Bangabandhu Tunnel will along the Karnaphuli River. This will accelerate economic progress, raising living standards and employment opportunities in the southern region.

Adding to the list of positive attractions like Parki Beach in impacts of the tunnel, it will connect to the Asian Highway network, enabling cross-border The Karnaphuli River, with movement of goods between India, Bangladesh, and Myanmar. This, along with enhancing Chattogram port efficiency, will greatly boost road-based cross-border trade. Being a part of the China Government's 'One Belt, One Road' initiative will also provide a key link in cross-country transport corridors.

The tunnel serves not just as a transportation route or boon to the economy but as a symbol of the nation's progress and development. With great expectations towards the engineering marvel, the country is ready to dive into the mighty river of opportunities.







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