



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina laid the foundation stone of a 668 m bridge in Kalapara upazila of Patuakhali district on 19 November 2013.



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## PM lays foundation stone of Shahid Syed Nazrul Islam Bridge in Patuakhali

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina laid the foundation stone of a 668 m pre-stressed concrete girder bridge over the river Bara Baliatoli Andharmani on Kalapara-Baliatoli-Gangamoti road in Kalapara upazila of Patuakhali district on 19 November 2013. The bridge with an approach road of 10 kms (including 5 box culverts) has been named in memory of Shahid Syed Nazrul Islam.

The construction of the bridge, funded solely by the Government of Bangladesh, is being implemented by Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) at a cost of Taka 125.41 crore is expected to be completed by June 2016.

Shahid Syed Nazrul Islam Bridge, when constructed, will facilitate to develop agricultural production and rural communication system through establishment of an improved road network system between the district headquarter and

the upazilas, between the upazila headquarters and Union Parishads, growth centres and rural markets. The bridge will go a long way to increase the number of tourists through establishing a road network between Kuakata Tourist Centre and the adjacent localities. The bridge will also create a direct linkage with Gangamoti, the unique venue of viewing the enchanting sight of sunrise and sunset at Kuakata. Kuakata happens to be the second largest sea beach in Bangladesh. It is the place where one can be familiar with the lives and culture of the Rakhain aboriginal people and also enjoy the marvelous scenic beauty of the mangrove forest near the beach.

Earlier, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina also inaugurated Paira Seaport, the country's third seaport at the Rabnabad Channel in Kalapara Upazila of Patuakhali district, which is expected to usher in a new horizon in the country's export and import and goods transportation.





## LGED spearheads Infrastructure development in CHT

On the eve of the 16th anniversary of signing of the Chittagong Hill Tracts Peace Accord on December 2, 1997 the Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in a message on 1 December 2013, said her government is pledge bound to maintain peace all over the country including the Chittagong Hill Tracts areas.

In pursuance of the development programmes in CHT region, Local Government Engineering Department, LGED, had taken up four development projects in 1997 aiming to remove backwardness and to bolster socio-economic upliftment in CHT region. Since 1997, a large number of reconstruction of roads, construction of bridges/culverts, water resources schemes, development of rural markets and construction of landing rams had been completed. LGED had also successfully implemented construction of 53 km long Lama-Suwalak Road Development Project to improve the overall socio-economic development of the three hill districts.

The Chittagong Hill Tracts Rural Development Project- 1st Phase has been completed in December 2009. Under this project (LGED Part) reconstruction of 56 km upazila roads, 197 km union roads and 4373 meters bridges and culverts had been completed. Besides, the Rural Infrastructure Development Project : Chittagong Hill Tracts began in 2009 and has been completed in June 2013. Under this project reconstruction of 94.52 km upazila roads, 36.86 km union roads, 1580.80 meters bridges/culverts, 10 nos. of growth centres and 38 km of tree plantation programme have been implemented.

In conformity with the Peace Accord, LGED has taken a spearheading role to explore a conscious path of sustainable development in CHT region.



Ms. Jaheda of Sunamganj is seen receiving the first prize for Outstanding Self-reliant Women's Recognition Award 2013, under LGED's rural sector, from State Minister of LGRD&C Advocate Jahangir Kabir Nanak on 5 October 2013. Present on the occasion were Secretary, LGD, Mr. Abu Alam Md. Shahid Khan and Chief Engineer LGED, Mr. Md. Wahidur Rahman.

**"Exterminate politics of destruction, terrorism and conspiracy."**

**—State Minister for LGRD & Cooperatives at an award-giving ceremony of LGED**

Speaking as the chief guest at the LGED's Small Scale Water Resources Management National Award-2013 and Outstanding Self-reliant Women's Recognition Award-2013 at LGED Bhaban in Dhaka on 5 October 2013, the State Minister for Local Government, Rural Development & Cooperatives Advocate Jahangir Kabir Nanak, MP said, we shall have to take a vow anew to exterminate politics of destruction, terrorism and conspiracies for good in a bid to build up the nation in tune with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's great idea of a 'Digital Bangladesh'.

Chaired by Mr. Md. Wahidur Rahman, Chief Engineer, LGED, the National Award giving ceremony of LGED was also attended by the Secretary of Local Government Division Mr. Abu Alam Md. Shahid Khan. The ceremony was also attended by, among others, Mr. Md. Abdus Shaheed, Additional Chief Engineer (IWRM), LGED.

The State Minister for LGRD & Cooperatives said, we want to get rid of religious bigotry to emancipate our women from long long years of subjugation. He further added, LGED has

been implementing various development programmes in the light of the Bangladesh government's poverty reduction and women's development policies. He also said, gender issues in LGED's activities deserve an applause.

Speaking on the occasion as the special guest Mr. Abu Alam Md. Shahid Khan, Secretary, LGD said, in addition to construction of roads and bridges, LGED has been contributing adequately to socio-economic development of the country. He said, as an outstanding implementing agency of the government LGED has been recognized and acclaimed at home and abroad for its pioneering role in social upliftment. He appealed to the women of the country to come forward to ensure their participation in the progress of the nation.

In his address as chairperson Mr. Md. Wahidur Rahman, Chief Engineer, LGED said that this is for the first time LGED is giving the National Award for Small Scale Water Resources Management to encourage the Water Management Cooperative Associations (WMCA) for effective water management and successful implementation and maintenance of the sub-projects. He said, LGED has also been giving awards to women coming from rural, urban and water sectors for their outstanding contribution to become self-reliant and motivating others to become financially independent.



It may be noted that Small Scale Water Resources Management under LGED introduced 9 awards in total in three different categories. There are three prizes for each category.

It may be mentioned that LGED organized a very comprehensive programme to observe the International Women's Day 2013 on 27 March 2013. On that occasion 9 women beneficiaries from rural, water and urban sectors were declared winners in recognition of their struggles to become self-reliant. The chief guest handed over crests, certificates and cash-prizes to all the recipients.

Earlier, an address of welcome was delivered by Mr. Md. Abdus Shaheed, Additional Chief Engineer, LGED.

### Danish Ambassador in Bangladesh visits LGED Headquarter

The Ambassador of Denmark in Bangladesh Her Excellency Ms. Hanne Fugl Eskjaer visited the Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) Headquarter in Dhaka today, 5 December 2013 and paid a courtesy call to its Chief Engineer Mr. Md. Wahidur Rahman.

During her visit the Ambassador reiterated the contribution of the Government of Denmark to different development programmes in Bangladesh. She categorically mentioned their financial assistance for rural infrastructure development, poverty reduction, gender equity, improvement of institutional capacity building, human resource development, etc. which were given to Bangladesh during the last 20 years. She said, the programme for infrastructure development in coastal regions through climate adaptability pilot project in the recent past is a timely intervention.

Mr. Md. Wahidur Rahman, Chief Engineer, LGED said, Denmark is a close development partner of Bangladesh. He said, during the last 20 years nearly Tk. 550 crore has been spent for rural infrastructure development in the



The Ambassador of Denmark in Bangladesh H.E. Ms. Hanne Fugl Eskjaer visited LGED HQ on 05 December 2013. During the Ambassador's visit Mr. Mogens S. Larsen, Head of Cooperation of Danish Embassy, Dhaka & Mr. Md. Wahidur Rahman, Chief Engineer, LGED are seen handing over and taking over the Implementing Partner's Final Report & Fixed Assets list of the recently completed RRMAIDP project of LGED. Mr. Iftekhar Ahmed, Superintending Engineer, LGED, Mr. Matiar Rahman, Project Director, LGED and Mr. Harun-Ur-Rashid, Senior Programme Officer of the Danish Embassy were also present on the occasion.

coastal region districts of Patuakhali, Barguna, Laxmipur and Noakhali through RDP-16, RDP (Phase-II), RDP-23 and RRMAIDP projects. All these development efforts were implemented with involvement of rural distressed women. He said, "Climate Change & Adaptability Pilot Project", funded by DANIDA, is an on-going project costing about Tk. 14.70 crore in a bid to make public life resilient to natural disasters. He also added, in consideration of the progress and effectivity of the said project, DANIDA has agreed to fund DKK 50 million equivalent to about Tk. 72 crore for next two years.

After the meeting with the Chief Engineer of LGED the Danish Ambassador had an interaction with the Labour Contracting Societies (LCS) women workers coming from the field level and got to know their socio-economic conditions. The Ambassador was highly moved to know how the DANIDA funded projects in the coastal regions have been able to change the lives and livelihood of the distressed women. She assured the LCS women to extend the scope of employment for them in future.

During the visit of the Ambassador, Mr. Mogens Strunge Larsen, Head of

Cooperation, Embassy of Denmark, Mr. Harun-ur-Rashid, Senior Programme Officer, Embassy of Denmark and Mr. Md. Matiar Rahman, Project Director, RRMAIDP were present, among others, in LGED HQ.

### Academic Feat

Engr. Habibul Aziz, MCIPS, PEng., Project Director, GRDIRDP, LGED has been



awarded the degree of Masters in Procurement and Supply Management from the BRAC University in 2013. He obtained a cumulative grade point average of 4.00 on a scale of 4.00. He graduated in civil engineering from BUET in 1986 and MSc. in Water Resources Technology and Management from The University of Birmingham, UK in 2003 with distinction. He joined in LGED in June 1989.

Engr. Khandaker Asaduzzaman, Upazila Engineer, LGED, Savar, Dhaka has been registered as a Professional Engineer (PEng.) from Bangladesh Professional



Engineers Registration Board (BPERB). Mr. Asaduzzaman completed his graduation in Civil Engineering from



Rajshahi University of Engineering & Technology (RUET) in 2000 and MS in Environmental Science from the State University of Bangladesh in 2011. He joined LGED as Upazila Engineer/Assistant Engineer in 2005. Mr. Asaduzzaman successfully completed a 47 days long training program titled "group training course on Seminar on Development and Application of Construction Engineering" sponsored by JICA held at YIC, Yokohama, Japan in 2009.

## UGIIP-II: A project with a difference

The relatively recent concept of good governance in the Pourashavas has now become a major addressable issue. Its underlying elements primarily include transparency, accountability and participation. Now, in combining good governance and infrastructure improvement, LGED has been progressively addressing them through a series of urban projects, with ADB funded Urban Governance Infrastructure Improvement Project, UGIIP-II, being the latest of them. Placing governance ahead of infrastructure and importantly, linking infrastructure allocations with performance of the Pourashavas on a continuous basis underlines the project philosophy and strategy. This performance based approach is characterized by demand-driven allocations, which hinges on certain clearly defined performance criteria and commitment of undertaking reforms.

UGIIP-II is at present in its final phase of implementation. So far it has met with explicitly substantial success on several fronts. Starting with 35 Pourashavas (PSs) (later expanded to 47), the 'sector-project' attempted to seed into the PS-purview the very elements of good governance and efficiency in their functioning and service-delivery. A few of the silver-lined successes up to mid 2012 include:

Impressive rise in tax (holding and non-holding) collection by the Pourashavas and unique collection efficiency (holding & non-tax revenue). Guided and motivated by UGIIP-II, these PSs have displayed that, once the specified reform-measures are taken and



A view of the road constructed under UGIIP-II in Satkhira district.

improvement-suggestions are internalized, result can be tremendous. As an evidence, total collection during last 2 FYs stood at a staggering Tk. 3,226.2 mill. Roughly, through taxes, these 35 PSs, earned in the last 2 FYs almost 7.7 times the aggt bloc-grant allocation that they otherwise stood to receive from GoB (@ avg. Tk. 60 lakhs per PS).

There had perennially been a distance between the urban dwellers and the municipal service providers. Introduction of TLCC, WLCC, CRC, citizen charter, GRC – all helped substantially increase poura-transparency and accountability.

The project initiated women's participation in local governance through their induction into different committees, which have helped getting a forum to their voices to be heard and recognized, raise leadership quality, address their practical and societal needs, implement UGIIP-evolved GAP, etc. The project-built Infrastructures are relatively women-friendly. Additionally, PS Gender Committees are also working to meet women's practical needs and in totality the PSs have become more gender-responsive. Moreover, most of the PSs introduced women section at PS office to address the women-needs.

Project PSs are working on poverty reduction with inclusion of urban poor. Around 5% of the poura-budget remains earmarked for the poverty-reduction component. Project has effected giving room to the poor representatives to

participate in different forum including TLCC. Under PRAP (Poverty Reduction Action Plan), 25 project PSs have Slum Improvement Committees (SIC)s formed with 79% women participation which are managing slum improvement works.

A wide range of UGIIP-II activities involves both conventional, as well as non-conventional elements. Salient had been: Citizen Charter, Citizen Report Card, TLCC & WLCC (albeit not new) and MCC which have displayed appreciable impact, especially on improvement of urban governance facets i.e. transparency, accountability and others. At the same time, there had been appreciable institutional and capacity development interventions (training & exposure) from the project which essentially helped the municipal staff understand their job and do them better.

Through TLCC and CRC, people were given forums/ways through which they can vent out their aspirations, frustration and send clear messages to the PSs citing areas requiring felt-needs for change or improvement. As well, the PSs can now feel the citizens' perception about them and consequent areas of improvement, and that UGIIP II has been successful in narrowing down the dweller-service provider gap.

The performance-based infrastructure allocation approach of the project (not a very new concept) has helped the cause through keeping the PSs somewhat on their toes, vis a



vis on an 'alert' stance that prompted them to continuously try and perform better. In the process, they have also earned the benefits that can be harvested.

It can justifiably be assumed now that lessons learnt from the performance of the project-PSs is that through efforts of establishing good governance, capacity building of PS personnel and with a consequent improvement of PS service-facets and associated efficiency that go with them, other PSs can as well achieve similar success-heights.

### **Md. Wahidur Rahman gets one-year contract to continue as LGED Chief**



As per government order Mr. Md. Wahidur Rahman, Chief Engineer, LGED has been employed as the Chief Engineer of LGED on a contract basis for a term of one year with effect from 12 December 2013.

Mr. Md. Wahidur Rahman was born on 12 December 1953 at village Joshpur, P.O. Meshtoli Bazar, Upazila Chouddagram, District Comilla. He obtained B.Sc. in Civil Engineering from Chittagong Engineering College in 1977. He did Master of Science in Irrigation Engineering from the University of Southampton, UK in 1987.

Mr. Rahman joined LGED as an Executive Engineer in 1982. He was a Project Director from 1993 to 2002. He was promoted as the Superintending Engineer in 2002 and became the Additional Chief Engineer of LGED in January 2008. He later assumed the charge of the post of Chief Engineer of LGED with effect from 28 December 2008.



Chief Engineer LGED Mr. Md. Wahidur Rahman and Project Director SCBRMP Sk. Md. Mohsin are seen receiving the IFAD Gender Award 2013 from Mr. Kevin Cleaver, Associate Vice President for Programme of IFAD on 25 November 2013 at IFAD Headquarter, Rome. SCBRM-LGED is the only project from Asia and Pacific region which has been given the Gender Award this year.

Mr. Md. Wahidur Rahman received ADB's Performance Recognition Award as a Project Director of TRIDP in 2001, 2002 and 2003. He also received ADB's Annual Award for outstanding performance in project implementation as Project Coordinator of Emergency Flood Damaged Rehabilitation Project Part A: Rural Infrastructure in 2005.

Mr. Rahman travelled to Australia, New Zealand, USA, Japan, Philippines, Thailand, Cambodia, Sri Lanka, Vietnam, China, Tanzania, Zambia, Pakistan, Italy, Nepal, India, South Africa, Greece, UK, Sweden, Germany, France, Denmark, Indonesia, Malaysia, Brazil, Singapore and Swaziland to attend seminars, conferences and loan negotiation meetings on official assignments.

Mr. Md. Wahidur Rahman is actively associated with many professional organizations. He is a Fellow of the Institution of Engineers, Bangladesh and was elected as a Council Member of the Central Committee of IEB in 2008. He is also a member of American Society of Civil Engineer, USA. Mr. Rahman was a former Vice President of JICA Alumni Association, Bangladesh. He was also a former Vice Chairman, Central Command Council, Bangladesh Muktijoddah Sangsad and a former member of External Forum on Gender and Development, ADB, Manila.

### **LGED's SCBRMP gets IFAD Award for gender equality**

Sunamganj Community Based Resource Management Project (SCBRMP) implemented by LGED has been awarded one of the first Gender Awards by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD). This award has been given in recognition of the project's outstanding achievements in promoting gender equality and the empowerment of rural women:

Mr. Md. Wahidur Rahman, Chief Engineer, LGED and Sk. Md. Mohsin, Project Director of SCBRMP had been in Rome, Italy and received the award from Mr. Kevin Cleaver, Associate Vice President of IFAD on 25 November 2013.

The announcement of the award came on the heels of the International Day for Rural Women, observed on 15 October each year. This year the awards went to five IFAD-supported projects have been being implemented in Bangladesh, EL Salvador, Ghana, Sudan and Uganda respectively.

LGED's Sunamganj project aims at improving the livelihoods and quality of life of poor women and men living in one of the poorest districts of Bangladesh. Women's participation in the project activities has been a priority concern in SCBRMP.



The award committee took into account the innovative aspects of the project especially the Labour Contracting Societies (LCS), where poor women and men form groups are taking up infrastructure work, receiving daily wages, as well as profits as contractors. So far nearly 20,000 women members of LCS have received the same wages and benefits as their male counterparts. Over 70 per cent of them have taken on leadership roles in decision-making for community development.

Expressing his reaction, Chief Engineer of LGED, Mr. Md. Wahidur Rahman said, "The award reflects what we have actively pursued in the project and in LGED, promoting a more gender-balanced, equitable development path". He also said, "Winning the award is a great honour and a big encouragement for us to continue our work on gender equality and to empower the rural women".

### Innovative stakeholder driven water resource development process

Over the past two decades, the First and Second Small Scale Water Resources Development Sector Projects have been demonstrably strengthening LGED in water resources management through organizational reform and capacity building. Over 580 subprojects were completed in 61 of the 64 districts, the exception being the Chittagong Hill Tract districts.

The Participatory Small Scale Water Resources Sector Project (Phase 3) is presently under implementation in 61 of the country's 64 districts with financial assistance ADB, IFAD and Government of Bangladesh. The Executing Agency of the Project is the Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) of the Local Government Division under the Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives. The Project commenced in January 2010.

The overall goal of the Project is to support the Government's poverty reduction programme through increase of sustainable agricultural



A 4-vent regulator of Purbo-Sarail-Madai Subproject, Kalai upazila under Joypurhat district.

production and to provide income generating livelihoods for poor and vulnerable members of the subproject communities. The Project is developing sustainable stakeholder-driven small scale water resources management systems with special attention to the poorer section of the population. One of the important project objectives is to construct water management infrastructure in about 270 new subprojects including flood management, drainage improvement, water conservation, irrigation and command area development that will benefit an estimated 235,150 ha of cultivated land growing cereals and other crops and increase cropping intensities up to 185%.

The Institutional Development Centers around the formation of Water Management Cooperative Associations (WMCAs) that are stakeholder-managed self-funding organizations. To date, 71 Water Management Cooperative Associations (WMCA) has been formed with the institution developed sufficiently for construction to start once contracts have been let, while at a further 103 WMCAs the process is on-going. The membership of these WMCAs totals 58,192 including 20,723 females. Members buy shares in the WMCA, make regular savings and contribute to an O&M fund essential to the subprojects' long term sustainability. Share sales total BDT 48,78,640,

accumulated savings BDT 115,29,625 and members' contributions to the O&M fund is already BDT 293,96,059.

The Technical Development is centered on a series of studies to evaluate the socio-economic, hydrological, agricultural and fisheries potential of physical intervention and identify any adverse environmental or social impacts. To date, detailed design has been completed for 89 subprojects and is in process at a further 36 subprojects. Earthwork in subproject construction is carried out by Labor Cooperative Societies, an important aspect of poverty reduction as the income generated not only benefits society members who participate but also the wider local economy. To date, contracts valued at BDT 416,307,004 have been awarded to 890 LCS and a further BDT 115,807,316 of contract awards are in process.

The Enhancement Program has been actively embraced by established WMCAs to further develop their potential. Thirty-four subprojects are completed with a 20 under construction. LCS members are involved in earthworks with contracts valued at BDT 811,76,000 awarded to 202 LCS.

Project continues to move forward successfully involving beneficiaries in the decision making that has been enhancing their livelihoods and building a stronger Bangladesh.



## LGED's UPPRP achieved a commendable progress under Rajshahi City Corporation

After completing the tenure of LGED's Local Partnership for Urban Poverty Alleviation Project (LPUPAP) in September 2007, Urban Partnership Poverty Reduction Project of LGED (UPPR) began implementing poverty reduction programme in Rajshahi along with other project areas. Through a Settlement Land Mapping (SLM), a total of 1595 poor settlements were identified in Rajshahi City Corporation.

During LPUPAP, there was around 35388 households with 153954 people who received some kinds of support through 83 Community Development Committee (CDCs). After launching of UPPRP the number of households' coverage has increased from 35388 to 72832 of which 27827 are extreme poor, 33287 poor and 11718 not poor. And the total number of CDC is 173 in 11 CDC Clusters and the total Primary Group is 2677 and Primary Group members are 58812.

Most of the Primary Group (PG) members in all CDCs were mobilized to be associated with the savings and credit programme run by the community. A total of 1826 groups and 35922 PG members joined with Savings & Credit group and continuing savings of BDT 10-30 per member on weekly basis. The total savings amount upto September 2013 is approximately BDT 90375380 (USD 1129692) from which BDT 113765404 (USD 1422068) was distributed as loan



The Chief Engineer of LGED Mr. Md. Wahidur Rahman and the Director General of Bangabandhu Academy for Poverty Alleviation & Rural Development (BAPARD), Mr. Md. Shawkat Akbar signed a Memorandum of Understanding in Dhaka on 28 November 2013 for Implementation and Supervision of "Revision, Expansion, Renovation and Modernization of Bangabandhu Poverty Alleviation Training Complex, Kotalipara, Gopalganj" Project. Mr. Md. Khalilur Rahman, Superintending Engineer (Design), LGED was present on the occasion.

among 15195 members upto September 2013. The range of loan distributed among the members is BDT 5000-1,00,000. Service charges distributed among the beneficiaries BDT 40000000 (USD 476190).

The leaders of each CDC and PG members took part in Participatory Process of Identification of the Poor (PIP) and found that 38% households are extreme poor, 46% poor and 16% non-poor. A total of 173 CDCs completed Community Action Plan (CAP) and prepared 392 SEF and 508 SIF contracts.

To create a healthy secure environment through Settlement Improvement Fund (SIF) contracts a total of 56761 sq meter footpath, 8902 meter drainage with drain slabs, 11265 twin pits latrines, 01 commu-

nity latrines, 2321 tube-wells, 15 platforms to the existing tube-wells, more than 5056 improve cooking stoves (ICS), 34 dustbins, 14 biogas plants, up gradation of floor of 2220 households, 76 street solar lights and 07 community centres are constructed till date.

To enhance incomes, assets and social dignity with the support of Socio Economic Fund (SEF) more than 4784 persons received apprenticeship grants, about 9171 received business start up grant, to improve their livelihood status. Around 10413 students received education support for keeping the education continued. During cold wave in Rajshahi, around 14200 extreme poor were supported with warm cloths/blankets. In order to promote Urban Food Production more than 13206 households received agriculture supports and nearly 22570 households got other supports like education to child labors, disable support, legal aid, adolescent reproductive health, waste management, hygiene education, eye camp etc. For effective implementation of social contract under SEF some of the LNGOs assist UPPRP like Urban Primary Health Care, BRAC, VERC & Rajshahi Eye Care Hospital etc.

The activities mentioned above under UPPRP have significantly changed the life-style of poor and extreme poor in Rajshahi City Corporation areas.



A woman shopkeeper is running her business with the assistance of UPPR in Rajshahi City Corporation.





Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina laid the foundation stone of a 560 m bridge at Piling Ghat and another 560 m bridge at Dafila Para Ghat under Islampur upazila of Jamalpur district on 10 October 2013.

## PM lays foundation stone of two 560 m bridges over river Brahmaputra in Jamalpur

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina laid the foundation stone of a 560 m pre-stressed concrete girder bridge at Piling Ghat and of another 560 m pre-stressed concrete girder bridge at Dafila Para Ghat over the river Brahmaputra under Islampur upazila of Jamalpur district on 10 October 2013. Funded solely by the Government of Bangladesh, the two bridges will be constructed at a total cost of Taka 204.14 crore and will be implemented by Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) before March 2016.

It may be mentioned here that after construction of these two bridges over the river Brahmaputra at Piling Ghat and Dafila Para Ghat under Islampur Upazila, the long-cherished hopes of the less privileged people of a number of north-eastern districts including Jamalpur and Sherpur will be fulfilled.

On completion of the two bridges, the distance between Islampur and Sherpur will be shortened by 35 kms and it will be easier to export and import consumer goods like coal and stones with the neighbouring country through land port. The transport cost will also be lessened.

The river Jamuna passes through the western side of Jamalpur district, while

the district has been bifurcated by the river Brahmaputra. Islampur Sadar upazila is on the western side of the Brahmaputra and on the eastern side of the river there remain four other unions. Besides, another union under Melandaha upazila is also on the eastern side of the river. Hence, the river Brahmaputra had so long been a great hindrance to communication and transportation of agricultural products for nearly 2 lakh people of these five unions.

After Foundation laying and inaugurating a number of development projects the Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina said in a public meeting at Islampur that none will be able to destroy the country and "we'll win the fight against poverty". She said, her government is making efforts for development of every village and every part of the country. She also added, the rail link of Jamalpur and Dhaka and northern parts of the country was established by Awami League government. She pledged that a Medical College will be established in Jamalpur if Awami League returns to power.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina said, her government has made mobile phones available for common people, which is now one of the important accompani

ment of their life. She said, youths are being given training on information and communication technology helping them find their own job. All unions of the country are now connected with information super highway, she added. The Prime Minister said, Awami League believes in serving people. Whenever the party came to power, it embarked on massive development programmes.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina also inaugurated 8 RCC bridges, 4 Primary School buildings and a 40-kilometer pucca road and laid the foundation stones of 9 RCC bridges and two Mukti-joddha Complex Bhabans in Jamalpur district. The successful implementation of these projects will strengthen the national economy through making significant contribution to the improvement of livelihood for the common people and socio-economic development.

Food Minister Dr. Abdur Razzaque, Land Minister Mr. Rezaul Karim Heera, Awami League Organizing Secretary Mr. Ahmed Hossain, local MP Alhaj Faridul Haque Khan addressed the meeting, among others. President of Upazila Unit of Awami League Mr. Ziaul Haque Zia was on the chair.

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