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Padma Bridge to turn wheel of country's economy

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Many pessimists said - not possible. Honorable Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina pronounced- Possibility instead. That possibility is now a proven reality before the nation. The whole nation is counting down to witness the moment of the long-awaiting inauguration of the Padma Bridge, the most challenging and exciting project in the country so far. After much anticipation, longing and pursuit – it is very tough indeed to simulate the emotion of the moment by any adjective. The accomplishment of a mega project like Padma Bridge by own funds is a matter of immense joy, pride and ability. It also upholds the dignity of our nation.

Was the announcement of the construction of Padma Bridge with our own funds very easy? Not at all. However, with rock-solid determination, many impossible things are accomplished, even though severe obstacles are found in the way. When the honorable Prime Minister declare to build the bridge with the country's own funds, the dream of the nation was revolving around many questions. However, the promising commitment of the daughter of Bangabandhu has brought this priceless gift to the nation, in a very short time. At a time when the construction of the bridge was progressing at a breakneck pace, the whole world came to a standstill due to the Covid-19 pandemic. But the pandemic could not stand in front of the Padma as a barrier wall to slow down construction works.

The whole bridge has been built from head to toe. After giving the last scratch of the brush on the Padma bridge, the lights on both sides lit up last week, as if the transmission of life awoke. The once dark village is shining in the light of Padma today, illuminated all around. The unseen bright dreams

have started to match the wings. The Look of Padma Bridge looks like a canvas made by the artist's masonry. It is not just a bridge; it will be a monument to our ability. At the same time, it sent a message to the world that Bengalis are as indomitable as ever. We can do everything we want.

However, this impossible task would not have been accomplished if honorable Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, the worthy successor of the Father of the Nation, had not made this pledge in front of the world. She has proved how to win the invincible war. This example of the Prime Minister will be an inspiration to the Bengali nation for a long.

The most exciting thing is that the people of many districts will be able to cross the Padma River by the bridge for the first time. The bridge will also connect them with the capital Dhaka. The people of Shariatpur must have not thought that in addition to standing in the middle of life and death in the waves of the raging Padma, the river crossing will be possible by the bridge!

The Padma Bridge will significantly improve the economy of the country’s southwest region, an evident proof of which is the Bangabandhu Bridge, around which an industrial revolution has taken place in North Bengal. The changes in the economy of North Bengal as a result of this bridge have contributed about 2pc to the GDP growth of Bangladesh. Such contribution has also been estimated in the case of Padma Bridge. According to many experts, the Padma Bridge’s contribution will be more than the Jamuna. Experts believe that many small and big industries will be growing in the south-western part of the country along the Padma Bridge route, including manufacturing businesses, RMG, assembling plants, storage facilities. According to ADB estimates, the direct investment made around this bridge will boost the regional economy. According to JICA estimates, a 10 percent reduction in travel time from Dhaka would increase the district economy to 5.5 percent, which would increase the region’s annual GDP growth by 1.7 percent.

Not only the people of some districts will get the pleasure of touching Dhaka by road; it is expected to boost the regional economy significantly that ultimately will contribute to the national economy. For example, the flowers of Gadkhali of Jessore are also exported abroad; But reaching Dhaka was very expensive and time consuming in reality. Now the flower that blooms in the morning can easily be transported to Dhaka; the cost will be also affordable.

Fish of Khulna and rice and battle of Barisal, all will be able to touch the capital without any hassle. Millions of people are getting rid of the huge troubles of bringing and taking those products, it will directly turn the wheel of the economy. GDP will increase and the wheel of livelihood of at least three crore people will be moving.

In this special moment of today, like the whole nation, we too are happy and joyful. Our happiness is a little more. Because in the dream Padma bridge, we had the opportunity to supply two of important materials- cement and bitumen from our company. More than 80 percent of the cement required for the construction of the bridge has been supplied by Bashundhara Cement, a concern of the Bashundhara Group. It is a great pleasure to be able to be associated with the Bashundhara Group which has some contribution with the bridge of nation’s pride. Bashundhara Group is advancing at a relentless pace under the theme of 'for the welfare of the country and the nation'.

Apparently, Bashundhara Bitumen has played a role in smoothing the bridge. This modern and advanced grade bitumen produced in the country has also been used in the connecting roads of Padma Bridge. The main objective of setting up Bashundhara Bitumen Factory was to bring unimaginable change in the road sector of the country. Roads are not durable with low grade bitumen imported from abroad; newly constructed roads are also broken. In addition to increasing suffering, the government has to count huge amount of foreign currency. With the commencement of Bashundhara Bitumen production in the country, the door of multifaceted possibilities has opened. The use of this bitumen in very important projects like Padma Bridge we have been able to highlight its quality.

Bashundhara is the only Bangladeshi company whose cement has been used in the pillars of the main bridge. No other domestic brand of cement was used in the main pillar. Besides, the work of connecting road of the project has been completed earlier. The work of the entire connecting road has been done with 100% Bashundhara Cement alone. In addition, we have provided 14 cement silos for river management at Jajira and Mawa. This is also being done with 100% Bashundhara Cement. Only Bashundhara Cement will be used alone in the Padma Railway Link project through which the railway from Padma Bridge to Jessore is being constructed. Thus, Bashundhara Cement has proved its capability by supplying four lakh tonnes of cement to the country's largest mega project Padma Bridge.

As a pro-business leader, the prime minister had taken a number of initiatives that were found to be very helpful to boost the country’s domestic production. As a result, Bangladeshi entrepreneurs have been exploring new areas of intervention to curve down the import disparity with other countries. We need more blessings from our prime minister so that the import subsidiary industries are easily grown up by domestic entrepreneurs.

There is no less sad story on the opposite page of so much joy. That initial conspiracy is not the last word; rather that was the beginning. Then one of the pillars of the bridge stood with its head held high, its rumors surpassing the stalks of imagination. Millions of master plans have been ruined to stop this bridge of trust and confidence of millions of people. Hon'ble Prime Minister, no evil force could come under the constant supervision of you. I think this bridge has been built only because of the sincerity of the daughter of Bangabandhu. However, the Prime Minister said with generosity, "The Padma Bridge has been implemented in the end because the people of the country wanted it."

May this bridge stand as a symbol of the trust and love of the people of the country to the prime minister!