

# Heavy traffic expected on Sirajganj highway if renovation work not completed before Eid

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**Online Desk:** If the highway renovation work in Sirajganj is not completed soon, there are chances of massive traffic jam, and homebound Eid holiday makers would have to endure extreme difficulties. As construction work on the highway continues, district police have identified 14 high-risk areas. Proposals have been submitted to the authorities concerned for the renovation of 20 bridges spanning about 51 km of the Chandaikona highway from the west side of the Bangabandhu Bridge to Hatikumrul.

There is risk of severe traffic congestion at the 14 high-risk points. Every year before Eid, all the vehicles carrying homebound commuters pass through the Bangabandhu Bridge-West Highway. As a result, there is extra pressure on this highway. It is expected that the roads on this route will be repaired by the second week of this month. Bus and truck drivers, in particular, say that if the work on the highway is completed, there will be relief during Eid journey. People of 16 districts of north Bangladesh use this highway to go home from Dhaka during Eid.

Every day, 16,000 to 20,000 vehicles use this highway, and during Eid, 30,000 to 40,000 vehicles ply it. Work is underway to widen and repair the four-lane highway – connecting the west side of the Bangabandhu Bridge. It has already caused traffic congestion and slow movement on the highway. Besides, the north lane of the newly constructed Nalka Bridge has been opened, but the Dhaka-facing lane has been closed. Traffic is moving through the risky old bridge.

The contractor, Akhter JV Project's Manager Ekhlash Uddin said that discussions have already been held with the Sirajganj Superintendent of Police. On the highway, potholes will be repaired soon. New four-lane roads have been opened in different parts of the highway. Officials of the local Roads and Highways Department said the renovation work on the risky points on the highway has been supervised.

Badrul Kabir, officer-in-charge of Hatikumrul Highway Police Station, said two rounds of discussions were held among the district police, officials of SASEC-2, and officials of the contractor company. They have assured to complete the repair work soon. On the occasion of Eid, 10 mobile teams and 16 picket teams will work on the highway. In addition, mikes and digital sign will be installed.

Sirajganj Traffic Inspector (Administration) Salekuzzaman Khan said they spoke to the district police regarding ensuring smooth flow of traffic before Eid. There will be 15 to 18 mobile teams on the highway. Work has already started to ease the traffic congestion. Senior police officials mentioned that arrangements have been made to make the Eid journey of the homebound people uninterrupted.