

Padma Bridge Rail Link: Dhaka-Mawa part to open by Sept, says Rail Minister

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Online Desk: The Dhaka-Mawa part of the Dhaka to Bhanga rail line via the Padma Bridge will be ready for train operation by this September. Railways Minister Nurul Islam Sujan shared this after inaugurating the Bhanga-Jashore rail line construction. “Train operation on the 81 km Dhaka-Bhanga part will start in September,” he said, reports UNB.

Furthermore, Dhaka-Jashore rail line will be ready for train operation by June, next year. Currently, construction work is going on in 14 stations of the railway. According to the project information, 20 stations are being constructed on the line from Kamalapur to Jashore under the Padma Rail Connection Project. Of these, 14 stations will be new. The six old stations will be revamped to make them up-to-date.

The railway line was constructed in three parts (plus a 3 km link being built between Dhaka and Gandaria): a 37 km Gandaria-Mawa section, a 42 km Mawa-Bhanga section, and an 87 km Bhanga Junction-Jashore section. Some 43.2 km of loops, siding and Y-connections bring the total track length to 215.2 km.

The Padma Bridge was opened for vehicular movement on June 26 last year. On August 20, nearly two months after the inauguration of the Padma Bridge, the railway minister inaugurated the work of laying the railway line at the Jazira end of the main bridge.

According to the project sources, the Padma Bridge rail link project was estimated to cost Tk 34,988.86 crore at the time of approval of the DPP in 2016. The term was set for December 2022. But in April 2019, the cost of the project was increased by Tk 4,269.27 crore and the cost was fixed at Tk 39,258.13 crore. The ECNEC meeting also approved the proposal to extend the project till June 2024.

China Exim Bank is financing the project on a G2G basis. Of this, China’s Exim Bank will provide loan assistance of about Tk 21,000 crore. The final loan agreement was signed with China in April 2018. The remaining money would be spent from government funds. The project is being constructed by Chinese contractor CREC.