

NON-BALLOTTEE HAJJ PILGRIMS CA urged to solve crisis over 'tasria'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Most of the non-ballottee pilgrims will not be able to perform Hajj if Saudi Embassy in Dhaka does not provide them with visas without 'tasria'—documents for hiring residences in Saudi Arabia, leaders of different hajj agencies said yesterday.

Hajj Agencies Association of Bangladesh (HAAB), a platform of Hajj agencies in Bangladesh, held a rally at Naya Paltan in the city and submitted a memorandum to President/Chief Adviser Iajuddin Ahmed urging him to immediately

solve the crisis of 'tasria' so that around 48000 non-ballottees can fly Saudi Arabia in time.

'Ballottee pilgrims don't need to show 'tasria' but non-ballottee pilgrims have to place 'tasria' before Saudi Embassy in Dhaka for collecting visas,' said Mohammed Faruque, president of HAAB.

He urged the caretaker government to take immediate steps consulting with the Saudi government and Saudi Embassy in Dhaka so that non-ballottee pilgrims can leave for Saudi Arab like their ballottee compatriots.

However, Biman Bangladesh Airlines has been compelled to postpone the flight schedules from November 31 to December 3 as non-ballottee pilgrims could not collect visas since they are yet to get their 'tasria'.

Meanwhile, Biman Bangladesh authorities said they will not operate additional hajj flights on Dhaka-Jeddah route beyond its already declared schedule (November 26 to December 22) since there is no additional slots for landing of the airliners in Jeddah Airport.

The crisis may turn severe if the non-ballottee pilgrims do not receive the 'tasria' within five to seven days. HAAB leaders also said they will be financially affected if the non-ballottee pilgrims fail to collect their visas due to lack of 'tasria'.

This year 2,551 ballottees will perform hajj under direct supervision of the government while around 48000 non-ballottees will perform hajj under the supervision of different hajj agencies.

The ballottee pilgrims have already left for Saudi Arabia by Bangladesh Biman flight.



PHOTO: STAR

Hajj Agencies Association of Bangladesh stages a demonstration in the city yesterday demanding solution to the crisis over 'tasria.'

8.5x3

Red Crescent to expand programmes on HIV/AIDS

Bangladesh Red Crescent Society (BDRCS) commemorated World Aids Day through a discussion session and street dramas at national level, says a press release.

BDRCS Secretary General M Shafiul Alam in his speech emphasised the need for public awareness about the fact that people affected by this disease are not 'untouchable'. He also committed to expand the society's HIV/AIDS

programme keeping this year's slogan 'Stop AIDS. Keep the promise' in mind.

Selvaratnam Sinnadurai, head of delegation, International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (International Federation), in his speech said the affected should not be hated, rather we should empathise with what they are going through and provide them with all kinds of support. He also urged that the level of awareness be more widespread with respect to HIV/AIDS.

After the discussion three street dramas named 'Shabdhan', 'Jante Hobey, Bujhte Hobe, Bolte Hobe' and 'Manbo Niyom, Bachabo Jibon' were presented by three Red Crescent Units' youth volunteers from the districts of Bagerhat, Jessore and Khulna. The aim of these street dramas is to raise awareness about HIV/AIDS at village level.

6x1

3 hurt in shuttle train rooftop fall in Ctg

CU CORRESPONDENT

Three people, including a student, were injured when they fell off the rooftop of a shuttle train running between Chittagong University (CU) and the city yesterday afternoon.

Two of the injured were identified as Moinuddin Murad, a first year student of Finance Department of the university and Md Nizam Uddin, reportedly a student of class two of a school. The identity of another injured could not be known immediately.

The accident occurred when the cables of a satellite connection whipped the injured and threw them off the roof of the shuttle train near Sholoshahar Railway Station at around 2:15pm, sources said.

Of the injured, Nizam Uddin was undergoing treatment at Chittagong Medical College Hospital (CMCH) while Murad and the unidentified boy were released after receiving first aid, said the sources.

Following the incident angry CU students ransacked the office of the concerned cable connection provider at city's Muradpur area.

10x3

14x3

3x2