

Special train for cattle

Railway to transport sacrificial animals ahead of Eid

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Railway (BR) will use trains to carry sacrificial animals to different regions ahead of Eid-ul Ahza to facilitate cattle traders.

BR has taken the move following the request of the fisheries and livestock ministry, Railways Minister Nurul Islam Sujan said while speaking at a press briefing at the Rail Bhaban yesterday.

"We will operate freight trains on demand from cattle traders," he said, adding that each wagon would be able to carry 16 to 20 cattle and fares of each wagon would around Tk 33,000 or 34,000.

"It's safer than any other mode of transport," he added. Traders from Kushtia, Chuadanga, Chapainawabganj, Pabna, Natore, Jamalpur and Mymensingh would get the benefit, he said.

Mia Jahan, additional director general of BR, said they last carried cattle in 2008, bringing them from Jamalpur's Dewanganj to Dhaka.

Currently, apart from freight trains, 17 intercity passengers' trains are now in operation with 50 percent of capacity to maintain health safety guidelines.

BR resumed operation from May 31 after more than two months to contain spread of Covid-19 in the country.



Children joyfully splash around in the knee-deep water covering Chattogram city's Agrabad Residential Area. Due to high tides, many parts of the area are inundated, causing residents to suffer, except for the little ones unburdened with responsibilities. This photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

Tk 100CR EMBEZZLEMENT

Crest Securities chair, wife held

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Detectives on Monday arrested the chairman of Crest Securities limited Md Shahid Ullah and his wife Nipa Sultana Nupur, who is a director company, on charges of embezzling a huge amount of their clients' fund.

On June 22, the couple shut down the stock brokerage house, where around Tk 100 crore is deposited by some 22,000 BO account holders, and went into hiding, police said.

They were arrested by a team of DB police's Ramna division from an area between Laxmipur and Noakhali on Monday.

Abdul Baten, additional commissioner of DMP's detective branch, told the media that Shahid Ullah admitted after primary interrogation that he transferred around Tk 18 crore to his own account.

"He had plans to transfer all of the Tk 100 crore to his own accounts," the official said while briefing journalists at the DB office in Dhaka yesterday.

On top of this, Shahid Ullah and his wife allegedly borrowed around Tk 30 crore from around 45 people promising them profitable returns, but then embezzled that money too, said law enforcers.

Baten said they would investigate whether the embezzled money has been siphoned off abroad or kept in the couple's accounts.

After the brokerage house was closed without prior notice on June 22, its investors were left worried about their money and shares. The same day they transferred back Tk 18 crore to their accounts.

Following this, two clients filed two cases against the firm with Paltan police, accusing Crest Securities of embezzling their funds.

According to information on the company's website, Crest Securities Ltd was incorporated in mid-2006 with its registered headquarters at

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Worse off at a shelter

Evidence of veterinary malpractices, harassment incense animal welfare activists

AANILA KISHWAR TARANNUM

For those involved in animal rescue, welfare and adoption in Dhaka, the name "Adi Guru" is quite familiar. Using this alias, one Naim Ibn Islam has been rescuing and sheltering cats and dogs, and he also provided treatment to the animals on many occasions.

Since late 2018, Naim has been running a shelter called Kalua's Homes at Baruikhali of the capital's Rayerbazar area, on about 16,000 square feet of land (23 katha). On paper, this shelter appears to be the perfect space for rescued and injured animals, considering its location beside the river Buriganga and large space.

However, the reality barely resembled a happy place for cats and dogs. In early June, a group of animal welfare activists visited Kalua's Homes twice in one week after hearing multiple complaints

about its operations.

"I went with a team of seven other animal rights activists to see what was going on. We found that there were at least 80 dogs and 18 cats in the shelter, many of them on the brink of death, some paralysed, some injured," said Rakibul Haq Emil, founder of People for Animal Welfare (PAW) Foundation.

"It was a gruesome situation, to be honest."

Photos taken by the activists revealed a dismal picture. Scores of well and unwell dogs were photographed cramped inside a small shed, while paralysed cats were found in cages. Some of the dogs were all skin and bones, as the food given to them were inedible and covered with mould, said Saurav Shameem, founder of Care for Paws, another animal welfare group.

"The ill animals were not

being given proper treatment and medicine was not stored properly," he claimed.

No medical records of these animals could be found, so there was no way to determine which animal was undergoing what kind of treatment, or even when and where they were rescued.

Considering the scenario they observed on May 30 and June 6 at the shelter, the activists decided to intervene, and gave Naim a ten-point instruction with fixed deadlines.

A handwritten agreement was signed by all eight animal rights activists and Naim. A copy of the informal agreement shows that Naim agreed to expand the shed to allocate separate spaces for dogs, cats, and unwell dogs. He also agreed to immediately create a record of every animal and clear ticks and fleas.

On June 8, Naim - through a

Facebook Live announcement, handed over the shelter to two persons, saying he "was not in a state to look after it."

When the activists visited the shelter on June 13, the shelter was found still in abysmal condition, with dogs and cats suffering from mild to severe skin infections, food bowls filled with moldy bread and cake, and a layer of dust on water kept for the animals.

The two person left in charge of the shelter were unable to take care of so many animals, said the activists' team. In a later conversation, Naim also hinted the same.

Until July 4, independent activists alongside PAW Foundation and Care for Paws looked after animals at Kalua's Homes. Once another group of activists involved with ALB shelter and Animal Care Society of Bangladesh (ACSB) came

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Are test results always telling the truth?

Accuracy of Covid-19 testing raises concern after negative result of journo post-mortem

ANWAR ALI, Rajshahi

Family members and colleagues of Rajshahi journalist Tobibur Rahman Masum could not believe it when his coronavirus test results came back negative shortly after his death with Covid-19 like symptoms on the night of June 28.

Masum, who was chief reporter at Rajshahi-based daily Sonali Sangbad, had been experiencing Covid-19 symptoms -- a constant high fever, fatigue, cough, severe breathing issues and chest pain, and losing his sense of taste -- his family members and doctors said.

Still, samples taken from his nose and mouth two days before his death tested negative, they said.

Fifty-two-year-old Masum first began suffering from fever on June 17. He was initially reluctant to get tested as he was

trying to avoid putting extra pressure on limited testing facilities.

Finally convinced by his family, he agreed to be tested and his samples were collected on June 26. His test report became available on the night of June 28, half an hour after Masum died.

"He was a patient of heart and lung disease. We are certain that the reason of his death was heart failure, not Covid-19," said Dr Subrata Ghosh, in-charge of a coronavirus unit at Rajshahi Medical College Hospital, quoting from Masum's death certificate.

However, those close to Mamun found his negative test results difficult to believe.

"I didn't want to believe it when I learnt Masum was Covid-19 negative. I thought something could have happened with the test," said Mahmud Jamal Qaderi, editor of

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Century-old pond being filled up in port city

FM MIZANUR RAHAMAN, Ctg

A large part of a century-old pond has been filled up in Chattogram city's Halishahar area, ignoring instruction of the Department of Environment (DoE).

The three-acre waterbody locally known as "Dhopa Pukur" is located at Dhopa Para in the city.

Locals alleged that the western part of the pond has been filled up by two persons -- Masudur Rahman Masud and Nasir Uddin Nasir -- without prior permission from the authorities concerned. They also "influenced" Sub-inspector Nasir Uddin of Bandar Police Station, who is also in-charge of Madham Halishahar Police Outpost, to look the other way.

Contacted, Masud and Nasir claimed that they purchased the land from four brothers including one named Mehedi.

While visiting the spot, this correspondent saw four newly-built thatched houses on the filled-up portion. A signboard reading "Ma Dairy Farm" was seen on a house while another signboard -- "Private Properties of Sirajuddowla Gong-Fish Project" -- was placed in the middle of the pond.

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Robbers killed father, son to snatch trawler, money: Barishal police

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barishal

Following investigation in connection with a double murder in Barishal, police yesterday revealed that robbers killed the man and his son for money.

The bodies of Helaluddin Haoladar (55), and his son Yasin Haoladar (21) were found in a bush near the river Pandab at Char Laxmipasha village in Bakerganj upazila between Friday night and Saturday morning.

Yasin's throat was slit and Helal was stabbed in the abdomen, said police. They used to run business of fishing traps and left their Pirojpur home with a trawler to Barishal to sell the materials around six days before the incident, said the law enforcers.

Police arrested four people and recovered a trawler from them in Dhaka on Sunday afternoon. Badal Haoladar, Badsha Haoladar, Shahin Khan and Sani Haoladar -- all from Bakerganj -- hijacked the trawler from the victims and tried to sell it at Sadarghat in Dhaka, said police.

However, Badal was released later after interrogation as police did not find his involvement in the incident, said the law enforcers. Tk 3,500, a mobile of one of the victims were also seized from the accused.

At a press conference at Barishal Police Lines yesterday, Additional Superintendent of Police Naimul Islam said Badsha, who was following the victims for few days, plotted the murder. Badsha is already an accused in two robbery cases filed with Bakerganj Police Station, he said.

On Friday, he and his accomplices tricked the father and son into carrying 60 fishing traps to Char Laxmipasha, saying that they would buy those.

When the duo reached the spot, the gang first killed the son and later his father and took their trawler away, said SP Naimul Islam.

Nasima Begum, wife of Helal Uddin, filed a murder case against unnamed people with the police station on Monday.



The banner says "no entry", but what is the policy on exits? The bamboo fence has left just enough space for one to squeeze out of the locked-down red zone in the capital's Wari, and that space is being utilised by a man exiting this high-risk area for Covid-19 infections.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED



Tuesday is the designated off-day for Gausia and Chandni Chawk markets in the capital, but the area's streetside vendors still set up shop. Sidewalks were buzzing with shoppers and hawkers as per usual, with little regard for the closure and the virus outbreak.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

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Baby born on street to differently-abled woman in port city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

On 12am Tuesday, most residents of Patenga in the port city were already asleep when the volunteers at Bidyandondo-CMP Field Hospital were busy with their newly inaugurated hospital and its patients.

Around the same time, a 34-year-old mentally challenged woman, who lives on the streets of Patenga, was in labour pain. Distraught and dishevelled, she was running across the road, trying to find some help.

About a 100 metres away from the hospital, she gave birth to a baby girl, right there on the street.

Hearing her screams, local volunteers of the hospital noticed the situation and rushed to the spot. They rescued the mother and baby and promptly took them to the hospital.

There, both were cleaned by on-duty doctors. However, due to blood loss, the mother was physically very weak. She received a blood transfusion at the hospital.

Mohammed Jamal Uddin, co-ordinator of the field hospital told The Daily Star,

AL JAZEERA DOCUMENTARY

Malaysia seeks info on Bangladeshi who spoke of migrants' mistreatment

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Malaysian Immigration Department yesterday circulated a notice seeking public information on a Bangladeshi migrant for investigation, after he spoke of mistreatment of migrants during Covid-19 lockdown in an Al Jazeera documentary aired last week.

Malaysian police also said they will summon reporters of news broadcaster for questioning over the documentary on the country's arrests of undocumented migrants, which authorities have accused of being an attempt to tarnish Malaysia's image.

In its notice, the Immigration Department provided the name of the 25-year-old man, his passport number and his last known address in Kuala Lumpur, urging for the public to contact the department with any information they could provide to assist in the investigations.

The Bangladeshi was among the migrants from Bangladesh, Pakistan and Indonesia quoted by Al Jazeera in 101 East documentary aired last week. Since then, his personal details have been circulated by Malaysians online who are angry with the critical report carrying allegations of mistreatment of migrant workers in Malaysia, reports Malay Mail.

On Monday, the company, which had previously contracted the Bangladeshi's services, disassociated itself with him, calling his views "biased" and pledging cooperation with authorities. It said the man never worked as its employee, adding that his statements were his own views and did not reflect the company's stand.

"Locked up in Malaysia's Lockdown", produced by the Qatar-based Al

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