

Rush of home-bound passengers less in three main city out-going spots

By Staff Correspondent

The rush of home-bound passengers was relatively less at the three main out-going spots of the capital, Sadarghat launch terminal, Kamalapur railway station and Gabtoli bus terminal despite the beginning of Eid holidays.

The presence of home-bound passengers has reduced to a record low as the holidays in government offices began much earlier on December 22, an official of a private launch company said.

He said passengers of long distance routes have already left the city and now people of surrounding districts are leaving the city.

An unprecedented rush was

BNP chairperson to meet people on Eid day

BNP chairperson Khaleda Zia will exchange Eid greetings with cross section of people including political leaders and diplomats on the Eid day, reports UNB.

She will exchange greetings with the members of diplomatic missions and donor agencies from 10 am to 10.30 am on the day.

From 10.30 am she will meet MPs, political leaders and people from all walks of life, a press release said.

witnessed on last Friday when the government offices went on holidays to mark long Eid, Christmas and other religious occasions.

The holidays were lengthiest ever this year with almost nine days at a stretch.

The tremendous rush of home-bound passengers was felt at Sadarghat launch terminal yesterday from where about 100 single and multi-decker riverine crafts left the capital city for more than 50 districts, mainly in the southern districts.

There is no railway transportation system in some southern districts and travelling by road is very expensive, according to Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority (BI-WTA) and Bangladesh Launch Owners Association (BLOA).

The carrying capacity of small launches is about 400 passengers while multi-decker launches usually carry more than thousand passengers in each trip.

Launches are still carrying more passengers than normal time, a shopkeeper of Sadarghat launch terminal said yesterday.

A section of launch workers are harassing passengers by jostling to put luggage on board their launches, said a Barisal bound passenger. The presence of pick-pockets have also risen taking advantage of such huge rush.

At least two persons were found to have become victim of pick-pockets at the Sadarghat launch terminal.

The situation was relatively better at the Kamalapur railway station due to presence of less passengers.

There were fewer passengers at the Gabtoli, Sayedabad and Tejgaon bus terminals as some big bus companies operating in long routes have set up different departure counters.

Some bus companies operating from the city's Tejgaon bus terminal were seen using public addresses system to attract passengers. However, the number of ticket blockers has reduced due to presence of less passengers.

There were no queues in front of bus companies as those companies used to sell tickets in advance.

Another reason of not having long queues in front of bus companies was sale of tickets in advance.

Physician dead

Noted physician Dr Abdul Motaleb died of cancer early yesterday at the Central Hospital in the city after a prolonged illness. He was 70, reports BSS.

He is survived by his wife, three sons and a host of relatives and admirers to mourn his death.



Buyers crowd at a city market yesterday catching up on last minute shopping before the big day. Most markets remain open way past midnight and this will continue till the morning on Eid day. — Star photo

DCCI suggests commuter rail system to contain traffic congestion

Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry has suggested that the government should go for a commuter rail or other mass-transit rail system instead of the proposed monorail in the city, reports UNB.

Monorail will be of little use in handling the huge traffic in the city, said Dhaka Chamber that also felt that the proposed routes also would not be viable.

It has advised the government to revise route maps and develop those in places on BOO or BOT basis so that cost is recovered from operating revenues.

Otherwise, it cautioned in a statement, the government will be stuck with another KAFCO-like project with haemorrhaging losses and little or no benefit for city dwellers.

Quoting the new Dhaka Master Plan 1995-2015, the Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry said the plan envisaged a commuter rail network as along-term solution to the city's staggering traffic problem.

The Chamber, pointing out

the substantial differences between the two systems, said the monorail is usually use for connecting two exposition centres, such as Vancouver World Fair, Disney World in Orlando, Florida.

"These are small, elevated single rail systems that carry a small volume of people between different exposition centres, and are not designed to carry large volumes of people," the Chamber said, while giving its reaction to the government initiative to build monorail in the city.

The statement referred to commuter rails like that in To-

ronto or light rail transport, specially those in Bangkok or Manila which are for carrying a high volume of people.

The Dhaka Chamber also raised a point of objection about the parties the government initiated talks with, as reported in the press. The business body said the parties consulted are not well known in the relevant field, and the selection process should be transparent and open.

Before going for a final deal with any company for such a mass-scale transit system the government should prepare a technical feasibility study to identify the most suitable and effective rail system with more useful route options, it suggested.

For developing a better mass-transport system the government should look for alight or commuter rail or a combination of both in joint venture of public and private sectors. The system will have to be operated on build-own-operate (BOO) or build-own-transfer (BOT) basis, it suggested.

Liberation War Museum holiday

The Liberation War Museum will remain closed from December 27 to December 31 on the occasion of Eid-ul-Fitr, says a press release.

From January 1 the Museum will remain open from 10.00 am to 5.00 pm as per its winter schedule.

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What's on today . . .

Mehendi festival: S-Vise Ltd will host the Mehendi Festival 2000. It is open to people of all ages. Venue: House No. 2, Plat No IF, Rd No 7, Block C, Banani (behind UAE Complex at Kemal Ataturk Avenue). Time: 11:30 am to 4:30 pm, 6:00 pm-9:00 pm till the night before Eid-ul-Fitr.

Weather

Dry weather likely

Weather will remain dry with partly cloudy sky over the country in the next 12 hours till 6 pm today, reports UNB. Moderate to thick fog may occur over Southwestern parts of the country during the early morning, Met official said.

The country's highest temperature recorded yesterday was 30.4 degree Celsius at Cox's Bazar and the lowest 10.0 degree at Srirangal.

The sun sets in the capital today at 5:19 pm and rises tomorrow at 6:39 am.

Maximum and minimum temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

City/Town	Temperature in Celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	Max	Min	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	26.3	15.4	74	55
Chittagong	28.7	13.7	80	70
Rajshahi	26.3	14.2	86	79
Khulna	27.8	12.7	94	79
Barisal	27.5	12.4	86	86
Sylhet	27.0	15.0	60	61
Cox's Bazar	30.4	16.0	73	77

500 freedom fighters receive Eid allowance

Local Government Minister Zillur Rahman distributed Eid bonus, allowance among 500 poor freedom fighters at a function in the city yesterday, reports BSS.

Each freedom fighter received Tk 500 at the function organised by Bangladesh Mukti-Maddha Central Command Council.

Speaking on the occasion, Zillur Rahman said the freedom fighters, the greatest sons of the soil were neglected by the previous governments.

Two killed in Barisal road mishaps

Two people were killed in separate road mishaps in Barisal on Sunday, reports UNB.

The deceased were identified as Abdur Razzak, 45, and Abdul Halim, 26.

Police said Razzak was injured critically when a passenger bus hit him on Jhalakati-Rajapur road and Abdul Halim also suffered serious wounds when a microbus knocked him down on Rajapur-Kankhali road on Saturday.

They were rushed to the Sher-e-Bangla Medical College Hospital where they died the following morning.

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Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Department of Environment

Paribesh Bhaban

E-16, Agargaon, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar

Dhaka-1207

Memo No. Paribesh/Tech(UNFCCC)-406/2000/2784 Dated: 06/12/2000

Subject: Invitation of Proposals for Consultancy

Applications are hereby invited from bonafide consulting firms having their registered offices in Bangladesh and capable of providing the services of individual consultants for project entitled "Preparation of National Communication in Response to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change" (UNFCCC).

Activities of the project, TOR and required qualifications against respective positions in the form of a bid document shall be available free of cost with the project office (Room 504, Fourth Floor, Department of Environment, Paribesh Bhaban, E-16 Agargaon, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka-1207) during office hours on all working days till 8th January, 2001.

Consulting firms interested in providing services through the positions mentioned in the bid document are required to submit their proposals with complete CV of experts detailing experiences along with remuneration to the undersigned by 9th January, 2001 during office hours.

The authority reserves the right to reject any or all applications without assigning any reason thereof. Incomplete applications will be treated cancelled outright.

Project Director

Preparation of Initial National

Communication in Response

to the UN Framework

DFP-30180-12/12

G-2199

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