

# Biman flight schedule faces disruptions

*Hundreds of passengers suffer*

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Air passengers are getting stuck at different airports and enduring immense sufferings due to disruption in flight schedules of Biman Bangladesh Airlines for the last two weeks.

The national flag carrier is either cancelling flights on some routes or delaying most other flights for several hours, after an aircraft was grounded at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport.

The situation turned worse for 350 passengers after the Biman's flight on Sylhet-Dhaka-London route remained grounded at Osmani International Airport in Sylhet for over 19 hours since Friday afternoon as the auxiliary power unit of the aircraft went out of order.

As the Biman did not take any step to take the stranded passengers to hotels, children and elderly passengers faced immense sufferings at the airport.

Frustrated at the flight delay, passengers staged a demonstration inside the airport on Saturday morning.

The Biman officials said the flight left Sylhet around 11:00am on Saturday after the necessary repairs.

The officials said each week the Biman had been cancelling at least one flight to Delhi and Bangkok.

Besides, a backlog of passengers and cargos have been created at different stations as the Biman is operating flights by comparatively smaller Boeing 737 aircraft in place of A 310 that remained grounded since January 25.

At a press conference on January 27, Biman Managing Director Kevin John

Steele said, "One of our aircraft faced some technical problems and the comprehensive repair will take another three-four days."

However, the aircraft has not yet been repaired and it is not even clear how long it would take to be repaired as necessary spare parts have not been bought.

Apart from this, most of the flights have been delayed three to four hours due to aircraft shortage.

The Biman now have two Boeing 777, two B 737 and one A 310 and a DC 10 operational.

The recently purchased new Boeing 777-300 is expected to be in operation after being inaugurated by the prime minister tomorrow.

However, the world's last serving passenger carrier, DC 10, will go into retirement from February 20.

## PM riding Indian train

*Says Rizvi*

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is now riding a train hired from India, said BNP joint Secretary General Rizvi Ahmed yesterday.

"The prime minister could not board any Bangladeshi train," Rizvi said criticising Hasina's remark about party Chairperson Khaleda Zia on Saturday.

He was speaking to the journalists at the party central office in the capital's Nayapalton.

All the train staff, including the guard and ticket checker, is from India, Rizvi said, adding that the BNP could not board this train.

The BNP leader came down hard on the PM a day after she criticised Khaleda saying, "Golapi is now riding the upazila train having missed the train for the national election."

At a public rally in Sarda of Rajshahi, Hasina, also president of the Awami League, made the remark as BNP was participating in the upazila polls after boycotting the January 5 parliamentary elections.

Terming the PM's statement indecent, Rizvi said, "We along with the people would drive out the hired Indian train from this country through a movement."

Rizvi alleged that police were harassing the opposition leaders of the grassroots who are taking part in the upazila polls by filing cases and issuing arrest warrants.

## Chief whip

FROM PAGE 16

League in his constituency Bauphal and other areas might have hatched a conspiracy.

"Sometimes they contest elections against me and sometimes they help BNP and Jatiya Party going against me," he added.

Meanwhile, the Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) yesterday termed the speech of Feroz a bad omen for good governance and democracy and asked him to withdraw his comments.

In a statement, the anti-graft watchdog urged the Speaker and lawmakers to examine whether such stance in favour of unbridled corruption suites the post of chief whip.

TIB Executive Director Iftekharuzzaman said such statements would encourage corrupts and the arguments the chief whip made in his defence was also unacceptable.

He called upon Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, also the leader of the House, to make her position clear in this regard.

Also yesterday, the parliament secretariat in a press release said the statement of Feroz was not published "properly" and for this his image was "damaged seriously".

"For a man who has been elected repeatedly through people's votes, it was not possible to ask for money in a public meeting," said the release undersigned by Nurul Huda, a deputy director (public relations) of the parliament secretariat.

"The fact is the chief whip told thousands of people that the party would be benefited if they use the money for the organisation instead of buying crests and bouquets."

His last book Ekjon Kobi Ekaki was published in 2013.

For his contribution to Bangla literature, Shahabuddin received the Bangla Academy Literature Award in 1973 and the Ekushey Padak in 1988.

His colleagues and well-wishers mourned his death.

Terming him a poet of nature, Professor Shamsuzzaman Khan, director general of Bangla Academy, said Shahabuddin's works added a new feather to the crown of Bangla literature.

## Armed forces

FROM PAGE 1

"You will have to earn respect and loyalty of the sub-ordinates and look after their all needs, hopes, aspirations and thoughts," Hasina told her audience.

Recalling the great role of the army during the Liberation War, she said, Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman had taken massive initiatives to develop it as a modern force after the independence.

An epoch-making progress has been made in the infrastructure of the army during the previous two tenures of her government, Hasina said.

Mentioning that the implementation of the Forces Goal 2030 has advanced to a significant level, she said, her government had included many avant-garde and sophisticated weapons and equipment in the army.

She also mentioned about the establishment of 17 Infantry Division in Sylhet, an Air Defence Regiment at Mirpur Cantonment and two ad-hoc mechanised brigades at Savar and Bogra.

"It's under my active consideration to establish a new division at Ramu in Cox's Bazar and an infantry division at Char

Bhabanipur near Rajbari during our present tenure," she said.

About the increase of posts, Hasina said, nearly 570 new posts have been created from Captain to Lieutenant General so far to bring more dynamism into the organisation.

The premier also cited contribution of the members of the army in constructing the infrastructures and standing beside people in time of natural disasters.

Talking about the 2009 Pilkhana tragedy, she said, her government has set an example in the history by completing the trial of the carnage in which 57 army officers were martyred.

Hasina hoped that members of the force would continue to brighten the image of the country both at home and abroad through their professional efficiency.

She thanked the army chief and all members of the force for their contribution towards advancing the trend of development in the country.

On her arrival at the venue, the premier was received by her Defence Adviser Maj Gen (ret'd) Tarique Ahmed Siddique and Chief of Army Staff General Iqbal Karim Bhuiyan.

## AKM Yusuf dies

FROM PAGE 1

8:30am notifying him about Yusuf fainting. Yusuf had regained consciousness after some time, said Wahab.

Jamil Ahmed Chowdhury, superintendent of Kashimpur Jail-1, told The Daily Star that after checking his health, the jail doctor referred Yusuf to BSMMU.

Wahab claimed that around 10:15am the jail authorities took Yusuf to the emergency section of the cardiac department at BSMMU where doctors suggested him to the Intensive Care Unit.

As there was no vacant bed at the ICU, the authorities suggested that he be moved to Dhaka Medical College Hospital, said Wahab, adding that Yusuf died around 11:15am just after he was put inside an ambulance.

However, BSMMU Director (Hospital) Brig Gen (ret'd) Abdul Majid Bhuiyan told reporters that Yusuf was rushed to the hospital around 11:00am in a critical condition and doctors had tried their best to save his life.

He denied that any doctor of BSMMU had referred Yusuf to be taken to DMCH. Majid said Yusuf died on his way to the Coronary Care Unit of the hospital and it was not true that there were no empty beds there.

Tajul Islam, counsel for Yusuf, and Wahab alleged that Yusuf was not given proper treatment at BSMMU. "Getting treatment is a basic right but the hospital deprived him of that," alleged Tajul.

After his death, Yusuf's counsel went to Tribunal-2 with a petition to allow Yusuf's family have his body without an autopsy done. But, the tribunal denied and said it needed to know the cause of his death.

After the autopsy at Dhaka Medical College, his body was taken to his Dhanmondi home. Yusuf's family were yet to decide when and where he would be laid to rest as of filing this report at 10:00pm.

Tajul Islam, counsel for Yusuf, said his client went through four heart surgeries

and had colon cancer. They had sought bail for Yusuf several times but the tribunal denied them all.

In last October, the International Crimes Tribunal-2 denied Yusuf bail for the third time following a report from Kashimpur jail that his health was "stable".

**BACKGROUND**

Yusuf in 1971 was deputy chief of Jamaat, a party which vehemently tried to prevent the birth of Bangladesh.

He had against him seven charges of genocide which left several hundred people dead in Khulna and Bagerhat during the Liberation War. The remaining six charges were related to killing, arson, looting, and forced conversion of Hindus to Muslims.

According to the brief profile read out by the tribunal in its indictment order on August 1, 2013, Yusuf, son of late Azim Uddin Howlader of Rajoir in Sharankhola of Bagerhat, joined Jamaat in 1952.

He became the chief of Khulna division Jamaat in 1957. In 1962, Yusuf was elected a member of the National Assembly. He was nominated provincial joint secretary of Jamaat in 1969.

In 1971, he was made the deputy ameer of the then East Pakistan Jamaat and he was one of the two provincial ministers from Jamaat.

According to prosecution documents, Yusuf established the Razakar force, an auxiliary force of the Pakistani army, on May 5, 1971, at an Ansar camp on Khan Jahan Ali Road in Khulna with 96 Jamaat activists. He also named the force.

Yusuf landed in jail on May 12 last year, hours after Tribunal-1 took the charges against him into cognisance. Later, his case was transferred to Tribunal-2.

A total 27 prosecution witnesses, including the investigation officer testified against Yusuf while his son Mahbubur Rahman testified as the lone defence witness.

## Leftwinger contests

FROM PAGE 16

been positioned by their backers as successors to Egypt's widely respected 60s autocrat, Gamal Abdel Nasser. In his first campaign speech, Sabbahi also claimed to carry the flame for Egypt's revolution – a mantra that implicitly positions Sisi as the establishment figure.

Sabbahi's declaration has already split the leadership of Tamarod, the high-profile protest movement that led calls for Mohamed Morsi's overthrow last summer. Two of its co-

founders have declared their support for Sabbahi, while its leader has stayed loyal to Sisi.

It is unclear how much of a campaign Sabbahi will be allowed to make. His party claimed two men who displayed posters of Sabbahi in their cars were arrested in a northern city this week.

Sisi has not yet formally announced his own candidacy, but was given the blessing of his fellow generals last week

BANGLADESHIS IN KL

## 116 more detained

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Malaysian law enforcers detained 116 more Bangladeshis between Thursday and Saturday under an ongoing nationwide crackdown against illegal foreign workers.

With this, at least 451 Bangladeshis have so far been held since the beginning of the crackdown on January 21 in order to streamline the country's labour market, according to the Malaysian media.

Malaysian English daily The Star yesterday reported that the immigration department with the law enforcers conducted raids and arrested at least 3,555 illegal immigrants and 30 employers till Saturday.

Of them, 1,400 are Indonesians, 537 Myanmar, 264 Filipinos and 239 Nepalese. The rest are from other nationalities, Immigration Director Datuk Aloyah Mamat told local reporters.

The foreigners have been detained for various offences, including overstaying, not possessing identification documents and visiting with fake travel documents.

The 30 employers, including 22 Malaysians, four Indonesians, three Bangladeshis and one Nepalese, have been held on suspicion of hiring or protecting illegal immigrants.

Contacted, Begum Shahida Sultana, first secretary (labour) of Bangladesh high commission in Kuala Lumpur, however, said they did not have the exact figure of detained Bangladesh nationals.

"Now, the Malaysian law enforcers are carrying out regular drives to trace the foreigners working illegally," she told The Daily Star over the phone yesterday.

## Youth dies

FROM PAGE 2

Rony said local people had seen police beat up his brother and drag down a police van into the police station.

Executive Magistrate AKM Mahabubur Rahman in his inquest report said Johnny had bruises on several parts of the body.

The DMC morgue did not conduct an autopsy till filing of this report.

The OC said Johnny had gotten the injury marks from the fight.

About half an hour after the fight, Sumon returned to Irani camp with policemen, Rony said. Several police vans surrounded the area and then held five youths, including Johnny and his brother Rocky. As their mother ran after the vehicles leaving the place with the detainees, law enforcers rebuked her and said she would be able to meet her sons at the police station in the morning.

Johnny's wife said he used to work as a driver of a police vehicle six months back and that they had a seven-year-old son and a daughter of one and a half years.

Meanwhile, enraged by the death, residents of Irani camp engaged in sporadic clashes with police. At least 10 received minor injuries, including four policemen. The policemen fired 20 shots in the air to disperse the protesters.

Police shown the four others arrested for "gathering at the place illegally and trying to create chaos".

## Wounded tigress

FROM PAGE 2

Shib Prasad, officer-in-charge of the Safari Park.

However, the surgeons were able to fix the severed vein during the operation that ended at 7:30pm, he said.

Pashuri sustained the wound in a hunting trap. Later, she was noticed by a tourist on January 27 in Lawdope village of Chandpai range in the Sundarbans. The forest department managed to cage her on Friday afternoon and brought her to the park on Saturday.

## Robocops help

FROM PAGE 16

officers and traffic lights, and, believe it or not, they're actually doing a great job.

At first glance, the robocops don't look like much. They appear to be rudimentary tin boxes with attached tin hands. But commuters have responded surprisingly well to the latest technology.

Demouto Motumbo, a resident of Kinshasa, said: "As a motorcyclist I'm very happy with the robot's work. Because when traffic police control the cars here there's still a lot of traffic. But since the robot arrived, we see truly that the commuters are respectful."

The eight-foot tall robots are made of aluminium and stainless steel for protection against harsh weather, and

powered by solar panels.

They wear sunglasses just like real cops, even though technically, they don't have any eyes. Multiple cameras installed inside their tough bodies help them record the flow of traffic.

This information is transmitted to a centre where traffic rule violations are analysed.

Engineer Isaie Therese, the brains behind the project, said: "If a driver says that he is not going to respect the robot because it's just a machine, the robot is going to take that and there will be a ticket for him."

Therese heads a team of Congolese engineers at the Kinshasa Higher Institute of Applied Technique, who worked on the robocop project.

## Milk Vita

FROM PAGE 2

The devices use global positioning system (GPS) technology that helps tracking a vehicle's location, movement, speed and mileage. By using this, it would be possible to check false claims on fuel consumption, replacement of spare parts and repair of the vehicles, he said.

"The company bears an unusual amount of expenses every month in fuel costs, repair and maintenance," said Munir.

Milk Vita spent Tk 2.42 crores for vehicle repair and maintenance in 2010-2011 fiscal year, he continued.

The expenditure, however, came down significantly to Tk 1.32 crores in 2012-2013 fiscal year due to strict administrative monitoring, the Milk Vita boss added.

Initially, the VTS devices have been fitted in ten milk-carrying tankers and vans that travel long distances to transport milk to the capital and finished dairy products to different districts.

Milk Vita has around 100 tankers and refrigerated covered vans. It will cost only Tk 2 lakhs to install the tracking devices on these vehicles, according to the MD of the state-owned cooperative farm.

## Poet Fazal Shahabuddin passes away

FROM PAGE 16

He was buried at the Banani graveyard in the evening after three namaj-e-janazas at Basabo, Bangla Academy and the Jatiya Press Club.

Fazal Shahabuddin, the founding editor of the once-popular weekly Bichitra, was born on February 4, 1936 in Dhaka. He received his bachelor degree from Jagannath College (now, Jagannath University) in 1962.

He also served as the editor of the weekly Sachitra Sandhani and worked

for the vernacular daily Dainik Bangla.

Shahabuddin's first poem "Sandhya" was published in the Bangla daily Millat in 1953 but he rose to popularity following the publication of his first book of poems Trishnar Augnite Eka in 1965.

His other important poetic works include Okankhito Oshundar, Atotayee Suryasto, Ontorikkhe Aronyo, Aloheen Ondhokarheen, Amar Nirbachito Kobita, Artonad, Sonnetguchchho and Prithibi Amar Prithibi.

His last book Ekjon Kobi Ekaki was published in 2013.

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