



Above, passengers wait for vehicles at a bus terminal in Chandpur town. Below from left, passengers with goods sit beside Pabna bypass area of Dhaka-Tangail highway, a scene of waiting passengers at Natore, and transport workers obstruct two buses at Matidali intersection in Bogura town during the 48-hour countrywide transport strike starting yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

Commuters bear the brunt

Carrying of commodities halts as transport workers on 48-hour strike

STAR REPORT

Passengers across the country suffered immensely as transport workers started a 48-hour work abstention yesterday to press home their eight-point demand mainly related to bringing amendments to the recently passed Road Transport Act-2018.

The highways and regional roads hardly saw any public transport and goods-laden trucks, our correspondents from different districts report.

Only government-owned BRTC buses and some CNG-run auto-rickshaws were seen plying the streets mostly in town areas.

In many places, the transport workers created barriers on the highways to prevent plying of private vehicles, three-wheelers and motorbikes and even rickshaws and vans.

Large numbers of passengers standing at the bus stoppages looking for a mode of transport were a common scene in every district.

Vegetable growers and traders could not send the items to different places including Dhaka.

"Our 48-hour work abstention started around 6:00am today. And so, no inter-district buses left Gabtoli, Mohakhali or Sayedabad terminals this morning," Osmani Ali, general secretary of Bangladesh Road Transport Workers Federation, told The Daily Star.

Transport workers not only created barriers for the transports, they allegedly harassed passengers by putting burnt lubricants on their faces if somebody tried to commute with the help of alternative vehicles.

In Benapole, hundreds of passengers who came from India were stranded at the land port. Many of them took shelters at local hotels or the houses of local people as no bus left Benapole yesterday. No goods were exported from Bangladesh to India through Benapole port.

In Bogura, town commuters as well as long route passengers badly suffered as around 15,000 passenger carrying vehicles that run through Dhaka-Rangpur highway had to stop movement due to the transport strike.

"I booked a bus ticket for going to Chattogram to attend admission test at Chattogram University tomorrow [Monday] afternoon but yesterday night they phoned me and told that it's a transport workers strike so bus will not go to Chattogram. Now, there is no scope to attend the admission test," Sumon Rahman, 19, of Bogura's Nandigram upazila said at Satmatha in Bogura town.

Dhaka-Tangail highway remained virtually off-limits to vehicles, except some goods-laden trucks and CNG and battery-run auto-rickshaws.

Trader Khoda Box along with his daughter was sitting beside the highway at Rabna bypass for a bus to go home in Solonga of Sirajganj.

"I did not know about the strike earlier. I am waiting here with my child for three hours, not knowing when a vehicle will be found," he said.

In Nilphamari, about three thousands buses, trucks, covered vans and pickups remained stranded in the road as transport workers blocked them from plying.

There are 35 bus routes, including inter-district and long routes, operate from the Nilphamari bus stand carrying many thousands of passengers.

People of eight northern districts including Dinajpur suffered a lot as plying of short and long distant vehicles including buses and trucks remained suspended yesterday.

No goods-laden truck left Hili land port, said the traders.

All the passenger buses remained parked at respective bus terminals in Dinajpur, Rangpur and Joypurhat.

Stick wielding transport workers were seen harassing drivers of battery and shallow engine-run three-wheelers and private cars in Dinajpur Bus Terminal and College more areas in presence of their leaders.

The picketers did not even spare an ambulance driver.

In Chapainawabganj, export-import through Sonamasjid land port was normal but no trucks carrying imported goods left the area for other dis-

tricts, said Ekramul Haque, secretary of Clearing and Forwarding Agents Association of the land port.

Passengers, especially those who needed to travel to long distances including the capital, faced a serious problem.

The transport strike in Jhenidah virtually turned into a road blockade, adding to the woe of passengers.

The picketers forced the passengers to get down from engine-driven three-wheelers in different areas.

In Thakurgaon and Panchagarh, transport workers forcibly stopped plying of vehicles on highways and regional routes that caused immense sufferings to the commuters.

During visit to different spots in Thakurgaon town, this correspondent saw unruly transport workers moving on a truck and a pick-up stopped three-wheeler easy-bikes meant for carrying townspeople in the municipality area and forced passengers to get down from the vehicles.

They were seen smearing the faces of the passengers and drivers with burnt lubricant.

Even the drivers who run the vehicles of government offices were harassed.

In Sarkhira, a large number of passengers suffered badly while over two hundred trucks loaded with imported Indian items including perishable ones got stranded at Bhomra land port due to the transport strike.

In Natore, transport workers vandalised a few locally assembled vehicles known as Leguna when they were plying the highway as an alternative mode of transport for passengers during the strike, said Khorshed Alam, president of district's 'Leguna association'.

Our Bagerhat Correspondent reports: No buses started from Sonadanga Bus Terminal and Shibbari of Khulna city, leaving the passengers, especially those requiring travel to long distances, utterly helpless.

Our Correspondents from Tangail, Nilphamari, Bagerhat, Benapole, Thakurgaon, Natore, Dinajpur, Satkhira, Chapainawabganj, Jhenidah, Bogra contributed for the story.

2 rapists jailed for life

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

A court in the district yesterday sentenced two rapists to life term imprisonment in a case filed for rape of a college girl in 2016.

The lifers are Md Farid, 27, son of Abu Pramanik, and Md Hafizul, 23, son of Alam, of Punduria village in Santhia upazila.

Judge Mohammad Waliul Islam of Pabna Children and Women Repression Prevention Tribunal pronounced the verdict in presence of the convicts, said Public Prosecutor Abdus Samad Khan.

The court also fined them Tk 1 lakh each, Samad added.

According to the prosecution, the convicts abducted a girl student of Government Edward College, Pabna, on her way to a religious function near her house at Punduria village in Santhia upazila on the night of March 13 in 2016. They raped the girl one after another.

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The girl of the same village filed a case with Santhia Police Station in this connection accusing the two youths the next day and Police Inspector Nasir Uddin submitted a charge sheet against the accused on July 25 the same year.

I want to see JP in power before I die

Says Ershad

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Brahmanbaria

"I want to see Jatiya Party (JP) in power before I die," said the party Chairman Hussein Muhammad Ershad.

"If JP goes to power, there will be no murder and abduction in the country. The banks will not be looted and there will be no ghost cases any more," he said at a public meeting at Nabinagar Government Pilot High School ground yesterday.

Ershad said his party believes in the elections no matter who takes part in it or who does not.

One cannot change the government if he or she is not elected, he said.

Expressing his hope and desire he said his party will come to power again if the election is free and fair.

Nabinagar upazila JP Convener Kazi Mamunur Rashid presided over the meeting. Party Co-Chairman GM Quader and Secretary General ABM Ruhul Amin Howlader also spoke.

Early variety cabbage growers all smiles

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jhenidah

Many cabbage growers in six upazilas of the district are earning a huge profit from sale of early variety of the winter vegetable.

Growers are happy with good yield and price of the early variety vegetable this year.

About 687 hectares of land in six upazilas of the district have been brought under cabbage cultivation this year, which was about 580 hectares in the previous year, Jhenidah Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE) Deputy Director GM Abdur Rauf said.

Cabbage was cultivated on 99 hectares of land in Sadar upazila, 380 hectares in Shailakupa, 25 hectares in Harinakundo, 60 hectares in Moheshpur, 110 hectares in Kotchandpur and 13 hectares in Kaliganj upazila.

According to DAE, nearly 6,500 seedlings are needed for one bigha of land and the cropland needs to be irrigated four times.

Farmers usually sow the seedlings in July

and start harvesting in October.

Growers said each kilogram of cabbage is now selling for Tk 30 in the local markets.

Farmer Enamul Haque of Ganna village in Sadar upazila said cabbage growers usually use phosphate, potash and urea to prepare their land.

It costs Tk 20,000 to cultivate one bigha of land and he can sell the produce at Tk 50,000 if the price is over Tk 20 a kilogram.

Khaleque Mia of the village said, "I have been cultivating cabbage for the last 10 years as it is very profitable. I have cultivated cabbage on four bighas of land this year and already earned Tk 1,40,000 by selling the vegetable. If the price remains steady I will earn Tk one lakh more."

The fertility of the soil in the district is suitable for cabbage cultivation, DD Rauf said.



Farmer Enamul Haque of Ganna village in Jhenidah Sadar upazila tends his cabbage field.

PHOTO: STAR

Woman dies from food poisoning

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar

A woman died from food poisoning and four of her family members fell sick in Madhabpur upazila of Habiganj early yesterday.

The deceased was identified as Maya Debnath, 50, wife of Sunil Debnath of Puraikola village.

Seriously ill Sunil, his two sons Sukumar Debnath and Shankar Debnath and Sunil's nephew Mithun Devnath were admitted to Habiganj Sadar Hospital from where Sunil and Sukumar were shifted to Sylhet MAG Osmani Medical College Hospital as their condition deteriorated.

Quoting relatives and neighbours of the victims, police said after having their meal together with rice and egg curry around 10:00pm on Saturday, they all fell sick suddenly and started vomiting.

Neighbours took them to Habiganj Sadar Hospital where Maya died around 1:00am.

PROJECT IN RANGPUR, NILPHAMARI CARE plans training for 4.3m on health

STAR REPORT

Some 4.3 million people in Rangpur and Nilphamari will be provided with knowledge and training on health and nutrition practices in line with the government's National Plan of Action for Nutrition and the SDG goals through a five year (2018-2023) CARE Bangladesh project named Joint Action for Nutrition Outcome (JANO), says a press release.

Funded by the European Union and in partnership with Plan International and Eco Social Development Organization, the JANO project will also provide secured access to information and strengthened services, including making model gardens engaging students in 330 selected primary and secondary schools.

The beneficiaries include 250,000 pregnant and lactating women and married adolescent girls, and 215,000 children under five years of age.

"These kinds of initiatives help to initiate a joint force to achieve sustainable development goals (SDG) of Bangladesh," said Ruhul Amin Talukder, joint secretary, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, at a workshop organised under the project on October 25.

The workshop at Pan Pacific Sonargaon realised its theme of Strengthening Multi-sectoral Collaboration for Nutrition Outcome for the project, bringing together representatives of government ministries and departments, private sector and civil society organisations.

The workshop was chaired by Ruhul Amin Talukder and Dr Md Shah Nawaz, director general, Bangladesh National Nutrition Council.

Zia Choudhury, country director of CARE Bangladesh, and Tania Sharmin, senior team leader, JANO project of CARE Bangladesh, were present.

62 kg of ganja seized from cattle farm

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Nilphamari

Members of Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) on Saturday arrested a teenager with 62 kilograms of ganja from a cattle farm at Monsurer More village in Saidpur upazila.

The arrestee is Md Sayed Hossain, 17, son of Ebraul Patwary of Pashchim Patwary Para village in the upazila.

Major ATM Nazmul Huda, commander of (Rab-13) Nilphamari camp said acting on secret information, the elite force raided the cattle farm of one Md Ebraul Patwary on Saturday evening and recovered 62kg of ganja from the spot.

The law enforcers arrested Sayed but his father Ebraul managed to escape, Major Nazmul said, adding that both father and son have been doing the drug business under cover of cattle farming for long.

The Rab also seized a mobile phone set used for the purpose of drug peddling, he said.



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Memo no. DSHE/SESIP/SPSU/1-349/Computer Accessories (GD-63)/2017/674

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Tender ID No.	Package No	Description of Goods/Works	Tender/Proposal Publication Date and Time	Last Selling Date and Time	Closing and Opening Date and Time
239465	GD-63	Computer, Equipment and Accessories for National Assessment Centre (NAC/BEDU)	29.10.2018 10:00 am	02.12.2018 12:00 pm	03.12.2018 02:00 pm

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Signature
Md. Abu Sayed Sk (Additional Secretary)
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