

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

Ramadan brings disarray to streets, survey finds

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Around 98 percent passengers of public transport in Dhaka city are having to pay extra fares during the month of Ramadan, said a survey of a passengers' platform.

Around 68 percent bus passengers are forced to get on or off from moving buses, while 36 percent passengers have to stand inside bus even after paying for "seating service".

Around 95 percent passengers face sufferings in public transport regularly and 90 percent of them express discontent over the situation, it said.

Bangladesh Jatri Kalyan Samity prepared the report after its three teams visited many key areas of the city in the last seven days, and talked to passengers and drivers.

The organisation revealed the report through a press release yesterday. It said about 97 percent of city buses and minibuses have been operating so-called "seating services" by closing doors between 3pm and 6:30pm since the beginning of Ramadan.

As a result, passengers waiting at different stoppages in the middle of the route, fall

victims to this anarchy, it said.

The association alleged that bus operators have targeted passengers who are in a hurry to reach home before iftar, and collect extra from them. The buses also charge extra from passengers defying the government-set fare rates, it said.

Only some companies and Bangladesh Road Transport Corporation run buses as usual, and follow government-set fare chart with passengers crammed into those buses.

The organisation said almost all CNG-run auto-rickshaws are running under contractual fares, and take three to four times more than the fare showed on meters.

Besides, 93 percent CNG-run auto-rickshaw drivers refuse to go to passengers' desired destinations.

The report says motorcyclists -- running under ridesharing services -- also resort to verbal contracts after 4pm instead of app-set fare, and charge three to four times more. Ninety-three percent passengers do not know where to lodge complaints while 90 percent think there will be no use of complaints, it said.

DHAKA TODAY

WORKSHOP

Calligraphy Workshop By Saifullah Safa
Organiser: School of People's Law
Venue: EMK Centre
Time: 10am

Venue: BAC Intl Study Centre
Time: 12pm

FAIR

Bodyspace Mindscape
by Wakilur Rahman
Venue: Dwp Gallery
Time: 6:30pm

THEATRE

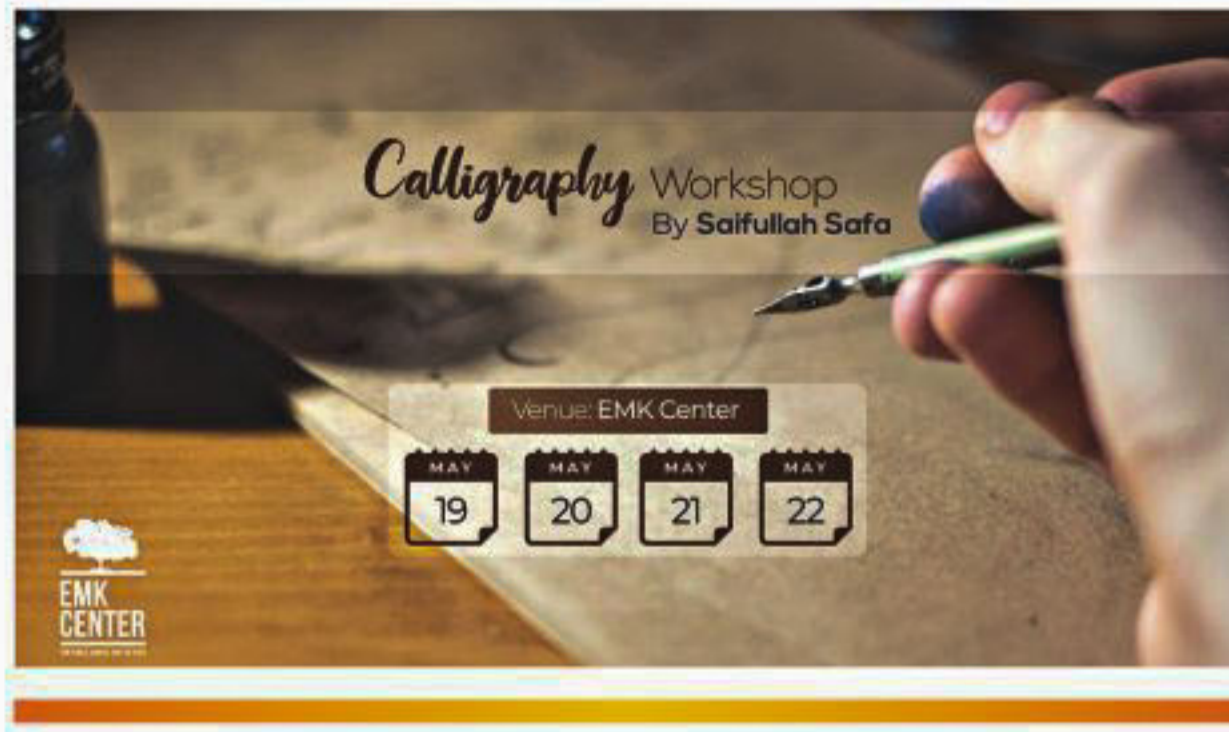
Desh Natoker Nittopuran
Organiser: Sublime Media
Venue: Experimental Hall,
Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy
Time: 7:30pm

FAIR

Eid Fair
Venue: Drik Gallery,
Dhanmondi
Time: 10am

WORKSHOP

Photography Workshop



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RAMADAN TIPS

Fasting and previous Cardiac Bypass Surgery

Patients who have had a cardiac bypass surgery more than one year ago and are able to perform routine activities, can observe the fast as long as they take all their medicines. Strenuous physical activity should be avoided as it can cause dehydration producing blockage of grafts. Those who are taking blood thinners like Aspirin, Clopidogrel should take it after iftar, whereas those who are taking Warfarin for heart valve surgery, should take it along with iftar.

Dr. Jahangir Kabir
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PHOTO OF THE DAY | ANISUR RAHMAN



Churihatta in Chawkbazar -- that came to prominence after a devastating fire earlier this year -- derives its name from the businesses centring the area: glass bangles. A trader is seen carrying the colourful fashion accessories from the factories to wholesalers, from where these will be distributed country-wide. The business sees busy days ahead of Eid, with each set of six to eight bangles selling from Tk 15 to Tk 40.

BRI will not create conflicts with countries

Assures Gowher Rizvi

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister's International Affairs Adviser Dr Gowher Rizvi yesterday said the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), launched by Chinese President Xi Jinping, would help Bangladesh achieve its development goals showing the path, where Bangladesh wants to go.

Addressing a launching ceremony of Bangladesh-China Silk Road Forum held at Jatiya Press Club, he said, "We need not worry. I want to emphasise very clearly -- this is not a zero-sum game, it's a positive-sum game. We can benefit from the various initiatives," he said, ruling out any conflict with any country or other regional initiatives which are already in place.

The foreign affairs expert said Bangladesh's support and participation in the BRI does not exclude the country from participating in other initiatives in the region, and will have no conflict with any country.

"Our prime minister has been emphasising the importance of connectivity for the last 10 years," said Dr Rizvi, adding that the premier sees connectivity as the mechanism and route to Bangladesh's prosperity and stability.

Chinese Ambassador to Bangladesh Zhang Zuo, Chairman of the forum and former industries minister Dilip Barua, former information minister Hasanul Haq Inu, BNP standing committee member Dr Abdul Moyeen Khan and writer Syed Abul Maksud, among others, spoke at the event.

"We've launched our own connectivity, BBIN (Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal); we had already joined BCIM (Bangladesh, China, India, Myanmar) economic

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The many wonders of PUMPKIN

Pumpkin is highly consumed in our country for its multi-nutritional benefits. This colourful vegetable is generally cooked as a curry with a blend of spices, and sometimes cooked with daal. In the present day, it is often roasted or even baked into chips. The uses of the pumpkin are incredibly versatile.

Pumpkin has a wide range of health benefits, and is one of the best known sources of beta-carotene which is a powerful antioxidant. Beta-carotene, which offers protection against asthma and heart disease, reduces the risk of developing certain types of cancer, delays aging and body degeneration as well as protects eyesight and skin. Moreover, pumpkin is a low-calorie vegetable which helps in decreasing the risk of obesity. Pumpkin is packed with fibre, helping one feel fuller and more satisfied for longer periods of time. Fibre aids in weight loss as well. It slows the rate of sugar absorption into the blood and is beneficial for digestion. Pumpkin helps to control diabetes; the plant compounds in pumpkin seeds and pulp are excellent for helping the absorption of glucose into the tissues and intestines, as well as balancing levels of liver glucose. Also, pumpkin pulp and seeds contain high levels of Vitamin C and beta-carotene, which boost the immune system through a powerful combination of nutrients.

Mohammad Abdul Kader, a pumpkin farmer from Shahbazzpur, Jashore, shares his experience of growing this vegetable. Initially, the pumpkin seeds are soaked overnight and later they are rinsed and dried and then sowed the next day. Loam, sandy loam and clay loam soils are typically considered best for pumpkin cultivation. Before planting the seeds, the land is prepared using fertilisers such as TSP, potash and urea. Fertilisers are applied again when the saplings show up. During the initial stages of plant



growth, irrigation should be carried out at three- to four-day intervals whilst during the flowering stage, irrigation should be done on alternate days. Harvesting is usually done two months after sowing seeds. Though pumpkins can be grown round the year, summer season is considered ideal for growing it. Abdul Kader, along with many farmers of the area, provides vegetables for Shwapno under the Shuddho project. According to Kader, this initiative has helped him adopt the right agricultural practices for growing pumpkin, especially in terms of learning about how much fertiliser or pesticide should be used. Farmers also have an opportunity to learn about the interval period between pesticide application and harvesting, known as the Pre-Harvest Interval (PHI). Pumpkin is a highly nutritious food due to its vitamins and mineral components. Pumpkin seeds, leaves, and juices all pack a powerful nutritional punch. Therefore, one mustn't forget to include it in his/her grocery list!

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS



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The SWISS Delight

This Ramadan, the more you use your Mastercard[®] debit, credit or prepaid card, the closer you get to a trip to Switzerland with your loved one. And there are other amazing prizes.

For details, please see page no 4