



On the first day of relaxation in the countrywide strict lockdown, people poured into the streets of the capital, mostly for shopping. From hawkers on a footbridge to salespeople at markets in the capital's New Market area, people in the retail business had a field day. Meanwhile, many rushed to the transport terminals -- like Gabtoli -- and powered through the inconvenient wait to head back home to their loved ones.



PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN, PALASH KHAN

Eid shoppers throng markets in Rajshahi

Business yet to pick up: traders

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Eid shoppers started crowding the markets and malls in Rajshahi city yesterday, as soon as the one and half-month lockdown to control spread of coronavirus was relaxed.

However, shop owners at different markets said business was still slow.

Visiting RDA market, New Market, Laxmipur, Shalbagan and Shaheb Bazar areas, this correspondent saw the markets were busy with shoppers; some of them following health rules, while some were not.

"The number of buyers are few in this gathering," Yasin Ali, a businessperson at RDA market, said.

He said lack of jobs during the lockdown have created financial instability among many, who are avoiding extra expenditures.

Md Raihan, a government employee was browsing through shops at RDA market with his wife and two children.

"We have come to the market to appease the children. We don't have anything to buy," he said.

Asma Akter of Bil Shimla area said she went to New Market to buy some small cosmetic items.

"I have to remain careful as Rajshahi is the hotspot of coronavirus. Still, I had to come out as the markets were closed for more than a month and I needed some things for my family," she said.

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Dhaka relapses to old madness

Streets jammed, markets crowded as soon as lockdown is eased

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

As soon as the "strict lockdown" eased for a week, Dhaka returned to its old self, with heavy traffic and bustling crowds on streets, and markets packed with shoppers ahead of Eid-ul-Azha.

Since yesterday morning, all modes of public transport, including buses, started plying the city's busy thoroughfares at different areas including Uttara, Banani, New Market and Mohakhali.

Dhaka once again witnessed its perennial traffic congestion in most areas and intersections, particularly around market areas. The wait at traffic signals was considerably longer.

Pedestrians, personal cars, motorcycles, rickshaws and other vehicles flooded the capital's streets, making commuters spend a harrowing time on the roads.

Palash Saha, a resident of Malibagh area, said it took more than an hour to reach his office at Farmgate from home, which normally takes 30 minutes.

Traffic Inspector Sazzad Hossain said, "We observed huge traffic pressure from the morning, as all types of vehicles started plying the roads."

Buses were asked to ply by taking half the number of passengers they normally would. However, some violated the rule, taking extra passengers during rush hours. Many people were seen without masks or wearing them under the chin.

A number of inter-district buses entering and exiting the city also contributed to traffic jams, as holidaymakers were going to their village homes.

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Khulna residents pay little heed to health guidelines

Large gatherings seen after lockdown relaxed, mostly at markets and cattle haats

DIPANKAR ROY, Khulna

Large crowds were seen at different places in Khulna city, right after the lockdown was relaxed. Gatherings were especially visible at clothing, cattle and wholesale markets yesterday.

Traffic jams were observed at various points -- including Sonadanga bus terminal, Rupsha ghat, Daulatpur and Gallamary bus stands, and Zero Point -- which must be passed to go from Khulna to other parts of the country.

A number public transport vehicles were seen carrying half the capacity of passengers, but many took more people as well.

Almost all buses heading to Mongla port and Bagerhat violated health rules. Bus drivers and helpers were seen calling passengers to fill all seats.

Dr M Sohidullah, a lecturer of microbiology and public health at Khulna Agricultural University, told The Daily Star, "I was trying to board a Rajshahi-bound bus from Daulatpur bus stand, but almost all buses are already full of passengers."

"Very few buses are following the half-

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DEATH OF DRMC STUDENT HC refuses to pass order on Tk 100cr compensation suit

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday refused to pass an order on a writ petition filed by Dhaka Residential Model College seeking its directive on the Prothom Alo to give Tk 100 crore as compensation to the college and the family of its student Naimul Abrar Rahat who was electrocuted to death in 2019.

The HC bench of Justice M Enayetur Rahim and Justice Md Mostafizur Rahman said it will not pass any order on the petition as the victim Naimul Abrar Rahat's family has not submitted the petition seeking compensation.

The court, however, kept the petition stand-over (waiting for hearing) as petitioner Dhaka Residential Model College's lawyer SM Abdur Rauf prayed for doing so.

He told the HC that the name of victim's father Mojibur Rahman will be included as a petitioner and it will be moved before the court later on.

Lawyer SM Abdur Rauf told The Daily Star that Principal of Dhaka Residential Model College Brig Gen Kazi Shameem Farhad filed the writ petition with the HC in June this year, seeking its directive on Prothom Alo to give Tk 50 crore to the college and Tk 50 crore to victim Naimul's family.

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Mamunul denied bail

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday rejected three bail petitions of Hefajat-e-Islam's former joint secretary general Mamunul Haque in three cases filed with Paltan Police Station over the 2013 mayhem and violence in Dhaka centring the visit of the Indian prime minister on March 26.

Judge KM Emrul Kayesh of the Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court of Dhaka passed the order after his lawyer Zainal Abedin Meshbah submitted the appeals against the lower court's rejection order on May 4.

In the orders, the judge said the charges brought against Mamunul were found to be true on the basis of investigation and his petitions were rejected.

A joint team of Tejgaon division police and DMP's Detective Branch arrested

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Empty beds hard to find in port city hospitals

ARUN BIKASH DEY, Ctg

With the number of Covid-19 patients in Chattogram increasing every day, almost all Covid-dedicated beds at hospitals are occupied. According to health experts, the ongoing trend indicates that the infection rate in the district may peak in some days.

Moreover, all ICU beds at government hospitals are occupied, while around five to six ICU beds in total are vacant at private hospitals, said sources.

At government hospitals, around 500 beds have been dedicated for Covid-19 patients, with all facilities including central oxygen system and high flow nasal cannula (HFNC).

Of the 500, Chattogram Medical College Hospital (CMCH) dedicated 300 beds, Chattogram General Hospital (CGH) has 150, and Bangladesh Institute of Tropical and Infectious Diseases (BITID) 35.

Although 14 upazila health complexes dedicated 15 to 20 beds each, most do not have HFNC facility, and many do not even have central oxygen supply.

Private hospitals and clinics dedicated some 500 beds, but many cannot afford treatment there.

Only 28 ICU beds are for Covid-19 patients at government hospitals. Of those, CGH has 18 beds and CMCH 10. BITID set up a five-bed ICU in May, but the unit

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Nine killed in road crashes

STAR REPORT

At least nine people have died in road accidents across the country yesterday, according to reports from our correspondents.

In Mymensingh, a five-year-old boy was killed in a road crash at Shibganj Bazar in the morning. The victim is Minjat, son of Saidur Rahman.

Quoting locals, OC Anukul Sarker of Gafargaon Police Station said Minjat and his mother went to Shibganj Bazar on an auto-rickshaw for Eid shopping.

After getting off the vehicle, Minjat started running and got hit by another auto-rickshaw.

He died on the way to the upazila health complex. The body was handed over to the family and a case was lodged, said the OC.

In Thakurgaon, three people were killed and two others injured in a road accident on Thakurgaon-Panchagarh highway at Kochubari.

The victims are Chanchal Roy (35),

Golam Mostafa (45) and Mazibar Rahman (55).

OC Khandakar Md Hafizur Rahman of Moidandighi Highway Police Station said the accident took place around 1:25pm.

He said a Panchagarh-bound truck, to avoid collision with a motorbike at Kochubari intersection, changed lane and hit a Thakurgaon-bound easy-bike. At the same time, another truck coming from a regional road hit the vehicles.

The collision left two passengers of the easy-bike (Chanchal and Mazibar) dead and three injured.

Locals took the injured to Thakurgaon Sadar Hospital where easy-bike driver Mostafa died.

Police seized the trucks. Meanwhile, Aatur Rahman Sweet (45) of Asrampara, who was injured in a road accident on Thakurgaon-Baliadangi road on Wednesday, died at Rangpur Medical College Hospital around 2:30pm yesterday.

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MINI BYTES



Prepare for a new generation of foldable phones from Google, Samsung, and others

NAHALY NAFISA KHAN

Google and Samsung, as well as several Chinese manufacturers, are set to introduce multiple foldable phones with flexible materials later this year, reports The Elec. The Chinese manufacturers include Honor, Oppo, Vivo and Xiaomi. According to reports, the devices will use UTG technology and panels from Samsung Display, BOE, or CSOT said the report.

Samsung is expected to be the first company to release its newest foldable phone generation. According to reports, the Galaxy Z Fold 3 and Galaxy Z Flip 3 will both be released next month.

Earlier this year, The "S-foldable" smartphone screen, which Samsung demonstrated in a phone that resembled a traditional rectangular smartphone with two hinges, was the show-stopper in smartphone convention. The device's screen "expanded" to a maximum of 7.2 inches when either one or both were unfurled. A thick bezel on the side opened up to show the front-facing cameras and provide a grip for the user.

Samsung also demonstrated a smartphone with a slidable screen. With the touch of a button, the screen progressively expands the visible field horizontally from conventional smartphone size by several millimetres.

The other companies are expected to follow Samsung's footsteps and

launch their foldable phones with ultra-thin glasses over the course of the remaining year.

Honor's new foldable phone, the Magic Fold reportedly will have an 8.03-inch inside display produced by BOE and wearing the company's UTG technology, as well as a 6.45-inch exterior screen, while Xiaomi's speculated Mi Mix Fold successor is expected to have an 8.01-inch display with Samsung Display's UTG. It could possibly come with a 6.52-inch external screen from CSOT. The phone's display proportions suggest it won't be a clamshell as previously thought, but rather a larger tablet-style folding. This new foldable from Xiaomi might be launched later this year, according to reports.

Vivo and Oppo are also working on foldable phones, which are expected to be launched in the last quarter of 2021 and 2022, respectively. According to prior reports, Vivo's foldable will include an 8-inch display with UTG and a 6.5-inch outer screen, while Oppo's foldable will be smaller, with a 7.1-inch foldable screen and a 5.45-inch outside display, according to reports. The device is thought to have a 7.7-inch primary display and a smaller external display.

Google's foldable will include a 7.6-inch foldable display with UTG. Since the reports by The Elec makes no mention of a cover display, it's unclear what Google has planned for its smartphone.

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