

# KANCHPUR-GHATARCHAR 120 buses to ply the route from Dec 1: Taposh

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

After missing two deadlines, Dhaka South City Corporation Mayor Sheikh Fazle Noor Taposh yesterday said 120 buses would run under a single company on the proposed Kanchpur Bridge-Ghatarchar pilot route in Dhaka from December 1.



The mayor said this while talking to reporters after the 18th meeting of the Bus Route Rationalisation Committee, held yesterday.

At least 120 non-AC buses -- 78 new ones -- will run on the proposed route. The bus company's name will be "Dhaka Nagar Paribahan", the mayor said.

Preparation work is being carried out as part of a joint venture agreement. Almost all preparations have been completed; remaining work will be done by December 1, Taposh said.

After the introduction of this pilot route under the Bus Route Rationalisation project, other routes would be linked with it, he said.

Earlier, Bangladesh Bank approved Tk 100 crore for the bus owners of Kanchpur-Ghatarchar route. Mayor Taposh, however, said that the funds will be used for developing the next phases.

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Monsoon is a bad time for Jurain's Medical Road, particularly the area around Bangladesh Diabetic Samity's Jurain Healthcare Center. The area's drainage system is so poor that it takes minimal rainfall for the centre as well as adjacent areas to go under ankle-deep water. Although the authorities have fixed similar issues at nearby localities, this particular area is yet to be relieved of its troubles. These photos were taken yesterday.



PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

## Mayor for a day!

17-year-old gets a shot at Rangpur City Corporation's helm



Acting as the symbolic mayor, Boishakhy Jha got to learn the know-hows of the job from Rangpur City Corporation mayor Mostafizar Rahman Mostafa himself.

PHOTO: STAR

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinaipur

A rural girl of Nilphamari's Jaldhaka upazila spent a busy day yesterday. After all, she was chosen to become the symbolic mayor of Rangpur City Corporation (RCC).

The initiative was part of Plan International Bangladesh's "Girls' Take Over" campaign, a global project aimed at empowering girls and transcending the discriminations that hinder girls from taking leadership positions.

SSC candidate Boishakhy Jha (17), mayor for the day, is a member of the organisation's Youth Advisory Panel (YAP). She was already well known in some quarters of her upazila as an anti-child marriage activist.

Her day started around 10:30am at the Rangpur City Corporation Complex in the city, with incumbent mayor Mostafizar Rahman Mostafa welcoming her to the office.

He then symbolically handed over the charge to Boishakhy. He went on to introduce her to the councillor elects, officials, and other staffers of the city corporation.

Afterwards, the mayor briefed Boishakhy about his daily works as the mayor. Mayor Mostafizar Rahman Mostafa demonstrated to her how the mayor's job works and what it entails, showing her a lot of nuances that may be difficult to understand from the outside. During this time, the mayor had Boishakhy sit beside him inside his office.

Talking to reporters as the symbolic mayor, Boishakhy said, "This is a completely new experience for me. If I had not sat on this chair [of the mayor], I wouldn't have known about all the intricacies of the job."

Panel mayor Md Mahmudur Rahman Titu; Dr Hrishikesh Sarker, interim divisional manager of Plan International Bangladesh; and Mobarok Hossain, town manager of UNDP, were present at the time.

## STUDENTS ARE NOT OKAY

Suffering from physical, mental health issues due to excessive dependence on gadgets, finds study

ARIJIN BIKASH DEY, Ctg

The pandemic has increased students' dependencies on electronic gadgets and mobile phones, with 68 percent passing two to four hours a day on their mobile phones, nine percent spending that much time in front of a computer screen and eight percent doing so on tablets, according to a recent study.

Such dependency has deteriorated their mental and physical well-being during the past one year, it stated.

The study, conducted on a total of 1,803 students of secondary schools (both Bangla and English medium) and madrasas in 21 districts of the country between June and December 2020, found that 52 percent of them were suffering from depression and felt that they were losing their tempers over trifling matters.

The research article titled "Prevalence and Impact of the use of electronic gadgets on the health of children in secondary schools in Bangladesh: A cross sectional study" was published in Wiley Health Science Journal on October 1.

Researchers from Dhaka University (DU),



### STUDY AT A GLANCE

- 68pc students spend 2-4hrs a day on mobile phones
- 9pc in front of computer screen, 8pc on tablets
- 70pc had no scope for outdoor activities
- 25pc used gadgets for online classes

### USE OF GADGETS

- 40pc watched cartoons, shows and movies
- 27pc used social media
- 17pc played video games

Chittagong University (CU), Chattogram Medical College (CMH), Chattogram Veterinary and Animal Sciences University, Asian University for Women, University of Science and Technology Chittagong and Southern University jointly conducted the study.

While students used to suffer from various health problems including fevers, skin diseases, diarrhoea and cough during 2018-2019, they started suffering from a whole new range of

health problems during the pandemic, including backaches, visual disturbances, mental health issues and insomnia.

The study revealed that 70 percent students had no scope for physical activities outside the home, while 50 percent did not even have the opportunity to carry out physical activities indoors.

Only 25 percent students used electronic

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## 'Nationalise education'

Demand teachers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Teachers all across the country observed World Teachers' Day yesterday, demanding nationalisation of education.

On the occasion, different programmes were organised, where teachers also demanded an end to the discrimination, in terms of salaries and other benefits, between teachers of private and public institutions.

While attending a programme by Swadhinata Shikkhak Parishad in the capital, Deputy Education Minister Mohibul Hassan Chowdhury said works will get underway to include non-government teachers in the Monthly Payment Order (MPO) scheme from this month.

The government has plans to gradually bring all non-government teachers and schools under this scheme, he added.

Under the MPO scheme, the government pays teachers of non-government schools 100 percent of their basic salaries. The teachers also get small monthly payments as allowance through MPO.

"The government has plans to nationalise education

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With a demand to nationalise education, "Bangladesh Shikkhok Karmachari Samiti Federation" brought out a procession on Barishal city's Sadar Road yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

## Dengue cases cross 19,000 mark

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least two more dengue patients died and 197 were hospitalised in 24 hours till 8am yesterday, of whom 46 were from outside Dhaka, according to the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS).

Meanwhile, the number of patients diagnosed with dengue in the country this year has crossed the 19,000-mark.

With the new cases, at least 936 people were diagnosed during this month out of 19,133 infected this year. Of the total infected, 2494 were from outside Dhaka.

In September 7841 were diagnosed, 7,698 were diagnosed in August, 2,286 patients diagnosed in July, 272 in June while 43 were infected in May and the rest were infected from January to April, according to DGHS.

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This road in the port city's Dewan Hat is in a bad state. Whether due to the use of low-quality construction material or regular use by large, overweight vehicles, the road has become synonymous with traffic tailbacks and frequent accidents in the Dhania Para area. This photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: RAJIB RATHAN

## Govt won't interfere in next general polls: Quader

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Savar

The current government will not interfere in the next general election,



said Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader yesterday.

"There will be no interference of the present government in the next election. Only if the Election Commission is impartial, it will be possible to hold a free and fair election. To this end, the president will form an Election Commission with a search committee," he said.

Quader, also general secretary of Awami League, was talking to reporters while inspecting the under-

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## Tech-based Hajj management from 2022: state minister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Hajj management in 2022 will largely depend on technology while the government will provide necessary training on this to Hajj pilgrims and those concerned, State Minister for Religious Affairs, Md Faridul Haque Khan, said yesterday.

The state minister said amid the Covid-19 pandemic, pilgrims may have to perform Hajj using various apps. Faridul Haque said the Saudi Ministry of Hajj and Umrah is currently conducting Umrah activities using apps.

He was speaking as the chief guest at a meeting -- at the conference hall of the Ministry of Religious Affairs -- with ministry officials and stakeholders involved in Hajj activities to prepare for the use of information technology as part of smooth and efficient operations of Hajj-2022.

The junior minister said the Saudi Arabian government has expressed hope that the holy Hajj will be held in 2022 due to improvement in overall situation of Covid-19.

In case of possible application of new technology in Hajj management, related officers, employees, guides, representatives of agencies and pilgrims will be made aware in advance, and necessary training arrangements will be made in this regard. To this end, instructions have been given to the concerned to prepare the necessary technical infrastructure.

The state minister said, "We will have to wait till signing of Hajj agreement between Bangladesh and Saudi Arabia for the overall direction of the next Hajj." Acting Secretary of the ministry Md Abdul Awal Hawladar chaired the meeting.