

Half fare, but on condition

Govt issues gazette notification; students term it unrealistic

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Amid raging protests, the government has issued a gazette notification regarding the demand for half fare for students for "city service" buses in all metropolitan areas.

On Sunday, road transport and bridges ministry issued the notification with five conditions, saying it was issued in light of the decision of Bangladesh Road Transport Owners Association to agree to students' demands.

They announced it on December 5 at a press briefing at Chattogram Press Club.

The half-fare system will be valid between 7:00am and 8:00pm in metropolitan cities, where "city services" are available, the notification said. To avail the reduced fare, students will have to show valid ID cards of their institutions. However, the fare will not be applicable on government and weekly holidays, according to the notification.

Half fares will also not be applicable for long-haul buses, it added. The notification further said the revamped fares will be considered effective from December 1 in Dhaka metropolitan and from December

CONDITIONS

- Only for city service buses
- At metropolitan areas
- From 7:00am to 8:00pm
- Not applicable on govt, weekly holidays
- Effective from Dec 1 in Dhaka, Dec 11 in other metros

Are we not students after 8:00pm? We demanded half fare not only for buses but all modes of public transport

PROTESTING STUDENT SHOHAGI SAMIA

11 in other metro areas.

The agitating students, however, termed the gazette notification "unrealistic" and said they want half fare for all modes of public transport and across the country without any conditions.

They said although it is good that the government has issued the gazette, it also has to be unconditional.

Shohagi Samia, a student of Khilgaon Model College, who is spearheading the 11-point demand for safe roads, told The Daily Star that the state cannot give

its people any condition.

"Are we not students after 8:00pm? We demanded half fare not only for buses but all modes of public transport."

"We want a gazette for students who can avail half fare at all modes of public transport across the country, not only in metropolitan cities," Shohagi said in response to the notification.

State University student Enzamal Haque Ramim, a representative of Nirapad Sarak Andalan, told The Daily Star that they want half fare round-the-clock, every day,

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Dhaka University hosts a large concentration of historic sculptures, where visitors from far and wide gather to breathe in the legacy of Bangladesh's liberation. However, they are often subjected to immense negligence, which obscures their glory. For instance on Friday, a string of clothes were seen hanging in front of the Anti Terrorism Raju Memorial sculpture.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

COURT CORNER

HC rejects petition of Shahidul Alam

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday rejected a petition filed by photographer Shahidul Alam, challenging the legality of a case filed against him under Section 57 of ICT Act, 2006, in which he was imprisoned for 107 days.

The bench of Justice JBM Hassan and Justice Razik-Al-Jalil delivered the verdict, saying the petition is not acceptable against criminal case proceedings.

It is mentionable that the Section 57 of the ICT act was abolished through the formation of DSA.

Why is alcohol a narcotic, asks HC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The HC yesterday questioned the inclusion of alcohol in the category of narcotics under the law concerned.

The court issued a rule asking authorities to explain in four weeks why its inclusion in the "narcotics" category of Narcotics Control Act should not be declared illegal.

The HC bench issued the rule, after a petition was submitted by Mohammad Faruq, managing director of RJ Tower Hotel and Resorts Limited, a company in Brahmanbaria.

ISOLATED, HELPLESS

Speakers express concern over plight of female migrant workers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Despite an increase in numbers, Bangladeshi female migrant workers still face multiple challenges, including sexual violence at workplaces, humiliation from their families and social stigma for working as domestic workers abroad, said speakers at an event yesterday.

They also face obstacles in immigration due to lack of proper information about agencies, coercion of brokers, inadequate language skills and lack of skill-based training.

The event titled "National Consultation on Women Migrant Workers' Rights and Dignity" was organised by Karmojibi Nari, Shobujer Oviyan Foundation and WARBE Development Foundation at the capital's Cirdap International Conference Center.

"Female migrants feel completely isolated since their very first step abroad, because they don't have any



ISSUES

- Sexual violence at workplaces
- Humiliation, social stigma
- Coercion of brokers

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Bringing workers under unions
- Increasing budget, manpower in ministry
- Taking actions over untimely deaths

formal understanding about where to find a safe place to stay," said Farhana Afrin Tithi, coordinator (research) at Karmojibi Nari, during her keynote presentation.

During the pandemic, they had to work overtime, but did not receive proper compensation. They were sent back to the country empty-handed, she said.

Drawing the attention of trade

union leaders, lawmaker Shirin Akhter, also founder president of Karmojibi Nari, said, "If the workers could be brought under unions, the problems could be solved to some extent."

Speaking about the lack of human resources at the relevant ministry, MP Barrister Shameem Haider Patwary, chairperson of the Parliamentarians'

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Sculpture of Bangabandhu unveiled in Turkey



PHOTO: COLLECTED

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A bust of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and a park named after him were inaugurated yesterday in Ankara, the capital of Turkey.

"It's really a matter of pride and honour for the nation that a bust of Bangabandhu and a park named

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More info, more accountability

Speakers call for youth to play vital roles in raising awareness at workshop on RTI

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Sukanta Chandra Howlader, a youth from Barishal, recently filed an application to Bangladesh Betar's Barishal office under the Right to Information (RTI) Act, 2009, seeking information related to their budget and expenditure for equipment purchase.

According to the act, he was supposed to get the information within 20 working days. However, more than 30 working days had passed since his application and but he was yet to get the information.

After more than a month, he received a call from an officer of the Betar office, asking him what he would do with the information. When Sukanta mentioned that he is an RTI activist, instead of providing the information, the official invited him to the office for a "tea party".

Md Babul Hossain, another activist from Jashore said, "We have to pay two taka for one page of application form through 'treasury challan'. The bank officials often refuse to receive such a small amount."

RTI activists like Babul and

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Captain Jahangir, through my eyes

RABIUL HASAN, Chapainawabganj

Bir Shreshtha Captain Mohiuddin Jahangir sacrificed his life for the freedom of his motherland.

On December 14, 1971, just two days before victory arrived, he led a group of Mukti Bahini fighters of Sector-7 and launched an attack on Chapainawabganj town from Rehaichar area, beside Mahananda river.

That battle was unique, in that it was conducted entirely by civilians, said Bazlur Rashid Sonu, who took part in the battle.

Fifty years on, he retold the story to The Daily Star.

"When I joined the Liberation War in April 1971, I was still only a 10th-grader."

"After it was decided that I was going to get trained to join the war, I made it to West Bengal's Maldah town through the Telkupi border from my native Kalupur village in Chapainawabganj's Shibganj upazila."

"After spending a month at a training camp in Shilguri, I was sent to Dinajpur's Balurghat in May, from where I was sent to Mohodipur camp. This is where I met Mohiuddin Jahangir for the first time."

As a fighter and commander, he was very disciplined, loyal and committed to liberate the

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VICTORIOUS DECEMBER



Bazlur Rashid Sonu



PHOTO: RABIUL HASAN

At Chapainawabganj's Rehaichar area, exactly at the spot where he died, stands a memorial built as a tribute to Mohiuddin Jahangir.

Ctg sees surge in dengue cases in winter

ARUN BIKASH DEY, Ctg

With each passing day, the number of dengue patients in the port city has been increasing across different government and private hospitals in the current month.

Over the past few years, the period between March and September always saw the highest number of dengue patients. However, the scenario seems to have changed this year.

Just this month, a total of 56 patients were admitted to different hospitals till December 12. Of them, 23 were admitted to Chattogram Medical College Hospital. Alarmingly, 17 of them were admitted last Monday.

Contacted, Brig Gen SM Humayun Kabir, director of the hospital, said they have introduced a dedicated corner for dengue patients due to the rise in their numbers.

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A patient sits under the protection of a mosquito net in the special ward of CMCH introduced for dengue patients. Even amid the onset of winter, the number of dengue patients is on the rise in Chattogram. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: RAJIB RATHAN

CONJOINED TWINS DMCH postpones surgery

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Due to complications involving their reproductive organs, doctors at Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) have postponed the surgery to separate two-year-old conjoined twins Labiba and Lamisa.

"We will wait 6-8 weeks to start the surgery again. We plan to complete it on time," Prof Dr Asraf Ul Haque, head of paediatric surgery at DMCH who leads the 32-member surgery team, told The Daily Star.

Surgeons started the surgery at 8:00am and continued till 12:30pm, but stopped after a tissue expansion.

Hailing from Nilphamari, the conjoined twins were admitted to the hospital on September 28 last year. Since then, they have been preparing

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Jail super, jailer sued over torture

Court orders CID to investigate

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Chattogram Central Jail's superintendent, jailer and three other staffers were sued yesterday over allegedly torturing an inmate inside the jail.

Parvin Akhter Hira, wife of convicted accused Md Shamim, filed the case with the court of Chattogram Metropolitan Session Judge Sheikh Ashfaqur Rahman under the Torture and Custodial Death (Prevention) Act 2013, said court sources.

The accused are senior jail super Md Shafiqul Islam, jailer Dewan Md Tarikul Islam, deputy jailer Md Saimur, prison guard Sabuj Das, and Subedar Emdad Hossen.

Advocate Fakhruddin Chowdhury, public prosecutor of the court, said it has recorded the complainant's statement and taken the case into cognisance.

The court has also ordered Criminal Investigation Department to investigate the case and submit the report.

According to the case statement, Md Shamim was convicted by a court in a case in 2004. He has been behind the bar ever since.

In the case statement, his wife alleged that the five accused tortured him inside the jail on various occasions.

On July 17, 2021, the accused tortured Shamim after tying him to a mango tree and later shifted him from Chattogram to Cumilla Jail.

The case statement said Shamim's wife got to know about the incidents after meeting him at Chattogram Court building premises on November 11.