



Transportation in the city can be expensive. But does that justify riding on a rickshaw with so many people -- including four children -- on the capital's busy roads? Sat precariously, each person pictured here carry immense risk of facing an accident due to the slightest of nudge or a sharp turn. This photo was taken yesterday from Shahbagh. PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

VACCINATION DRIVE 200 transport workers get jobs on first day

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A total of 200 transport workers got Covid-19 jabs yesterday, the first day of a special drive to bring the workers under the vaccination programme. They received the vaccine at a makeshift centre at the capital's Mohakhali Bus Terminal. The drive will continue today but not at the terminal, rather at nearby vaccination centres, as the terminal is not suitable for the programme, officials said. The Cabinet Division in a circular on January 10 directed that only vaccinated transport workers would be allowed to operate vehicles. As many of the workers remain unvaccinated, the government started the drive in the capital, said Sitangshu Shekhar Biswas, director (engineering) of Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA), after the programme's inauguration. He said they would conduct the drive until all workers are vaccinated. Manir Hossain, a driver of long-haul buses, was among the workers gathered near the centre. "I didn't get a text message even after registering a long time ago. So, I came here because our leaders told us that we wouldn't be able to drive if we're not vaccinated," he said. Zhumana Ashrafi Sweetey, medical officer at Dhaka Civil Surgeon Office, said they are planning to vaccinate 900 workers, but BRTA, through transport associations, provided a list of only 100 workers. The other 100 who came to the centre received the vaccine on the spot. A BRTA official said transport workers of Mohakhali Bus Terminal would be vaccinated at the nearby DNCC Covid-19 Dedicated Hospital today.



3 days, 40 ATM cards, 84 withdrawal attempts

Credit card frauds busted in Dhaka, one a Turkish national

MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN

Cloning credit cards of citizens of around 40 countries, a transnational syndicate has been withdrawing money from ATM booths of different countries. The syndicate -- with members in Turkey, Bulgaria, Mexico, India and Bangladesh -- has been involved in the crime for at least the last two years. After collecting users' credit card info through the dark web, they collect the money from POS machines with the help of hackers. Sometimes, the syndicate even clone the cards. Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime (CTTC) unit yesterday claimed to have obtained the information following the arrest of an international and local member of the syndicate on Tuesday night. CTTC identified the arrestees as Turkish national Hakan Zanburkan and Bangladeshi Md Mofizul Islam. Police

arrested the duo from Gulshan-1 area along with 15 cloned cards, five phones and a laptop, said Md Asaduzzaman, chief of CTTC unit. Hakan came to Bangladesh on December 31 with a business visa. Mentioning the purpose of the visit as "garments business", he was staying at a hotel in the capital's Paltan. Between just January 2 and January 4, he attempted to withdraw money with the cloned cards 84 times. The cards are from around 40 countries, including US, UK, Australia, New Zealand, Germany, Canada, Saudi Arabia, and Spain. But when he tried to withdraw money at an Eastern Bank Limited (EBL) ATM, he was thwarted by the bank's anti-skimming protection, said Asaduzzaman. A high official of CTTC unit involved with the investigation said he was planning to leave the country soon. "Hakan first tried to go to Malaysia. arrested the duo from Gulshan-1 area along with 15 cloned cards, five phones and a laptop, said Md Asaduzzaman, chief of CTTC unit. Hakan came to Bangladesh on December 31 with a business visa. Mentioning the purpose of the visit as "garments business", he was staying at a hotel in the capital's Paltan. Between just January 2 and January 4, he attempted to withdraw money with the cloned cards 84 times. The cards are from around 40 countries, including US, UK, Australia, New Zealand, Germany, Canada, Saudi Arabia, and Spain. But when he tried to withdraw money at an Eastern Bank Limited (EBL) ATM, he was thwarted by the bank's anti-skimming protection, said Asaduzzaman. A high official of CTTC unit involved with the investigation said he was planning to leave the country soon. "Hakan first tried to go to Malaysia.

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'Form credible probe commission'

Speakers demand at event on disappearance cases

DEMANDS

- Platform to present proof supporting claims against law enforcers
- All political parties must unite on this issue
- Stop coercing family members



STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rights activists, politicians and social workers yesterday in a protest meeting demanded a credible investigative commission for incidents of disappearance. "We have hundreds of proofs in favour of the claims by families of the disappeared, that law enforcers have been behind these incidents, but

In another incident, law enforcers talked to the father of the disappeared. They said they needed to talk to his son. They then took the son away and he never returned.

nobody listened," said Nur Khan Liton, secretary-general of rights organisation Ain o Salish Kendra. Political party Nagorik Oikko organised the protest meeting. "We have limitations, and we can't tell all the truth. But political parties can. All parties must unite on this issue," said Nur Khan. "I hope all parties, including the ruling Awami League, will join this demand for justice," he said. Nur Khan also discussed some incidents where proofs stand against law enforcers. During the pre-election period in 2013, eight youths disappeared in one night, he mentioned. "On that night, the mechanics working

in Nakhhalpara area mentioned which type of cars went there, where they were parked and the people who took the ones who disappeared."

"In another incident, law enforcers talked to the father of the disappeared. They said they needed to talk to his son. They then took the son away and he never returned," said Nur.

"In another incident, Rab came to a victim's house and took his mobile phone, while his father was at the police station filing a GD regarding his son going missing. How did they know about the victim before the GD was filed?"

He also said there should be a platform where people can present the proof supporting the claims against law enforcers in such incidents.

Afroza Akter of Mayer Daak -- an organisation of the victims' families -- said the families were made to file general diaries (GDs) or mention in case statements that the victims went "missing" or "never returned" or "were picked up by unidentified people" instead of filing legitimate cases.

Speakers condemned the harassment and coercion the families faced. Law enforcers had allegedly made them sign pre-written statements that said the families deliberately misled police by concealing information.

Mahmudur Rahman Manna, convener of Nagorik Oikko, said victims of disappearances did not go missing by themselves. "The government used law enforcers in these incidences of forced disappearance." Subrata Chowdhury of Gonoforum, and SM Akram, advisor of Nagorik Oikko, also spoke at the event among others.

Doors to Italy to remain open

Job applications can be submitted from Jan 27, says circular

JAMIL MAHMUD

Bangladeshis will continue to have the opportunity of applying for employment in Italy through the legal process as seasonal and non-seasonal workers in various sectors.

The Italian government allowed hiring workers from Bangladesh both in "seasonal" and "non-seasonal" categories from 2020, after an eight-year embargo.

As per a circular issued by Bangladesh embassy in Rome on Tuesday, this year, Italy will issue 69,700 visas for 31 non-European Union countries including Bangladesh.

Of those, 42,000 are seasonal and 27,700 non-seasonal visas.

Those seeking work will be able to submit applications between January 27 and March 17.

Arfanul Haque, labour welfare counsellor at the embassy, yesterday said this year, Bangladeshis can obtain jobs in agriculture and hospitality sectors as both seasonal and non-seasonal workers.

Besides, there are opportunities for lorry drivers and construction workers under the non-seasonal category, he said over phone.

The Italian government had withdrawn this opportunity for Bangladesh, as Bangladeshi farm workers violated conditions of Italy's programme

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Crores embezzled by promising jobs abroad: CID

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

He used to trick unemployed youths promising them jobs at Australian ports and in Canada. For that, all they had to do is train at Chattogram's Marine Academy.

Mirza Mukul (45), an Oman returned expatriate, lured around 260 youths in this way and embezzled around Tk 5 crore over the last two to three years. On Tuesday, a team of CID raided his residence in Bashundhara Residential area and arrested him, CID Additional DIG Imam Hossain told a press briefing at CID Headquarters in Malibagh yesterday. Around 26 passports, three automatic seals, 35 Marine Academy training pass cards, fake training cards, 25 passport application forms, and a mobile phone were seized from him.

ACTOR SHIMU MURDER Police quizzing husband, friend

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police are interrogating murdered actor Raima Islam Shimu's husband and his friend to confirm whether the killing was pre-planned.

Police arrested the actor's husband Khandaker Shakhawat Alim Nobel and his friend Abdullah Farhad after Nobel admitted to strangling his wife to death in their Green Road flat on Saturday night during a feud.

"We are interrogating the duo to know whether Farhad came after the killing or he participated in it as well," SI Chunnu Mia of Keraniganj Model Police Station and the case's investigating officer, said yesterday.

PRAYER
TIMING
JAN 20



	Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
Azan	5:30	12:45	4:15	5:43	7:15
Jamaat	6:05	1:15	4:30	5:47	7:45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

'It's baseless' BNP shrugs off allegation of hiring lobbyists

UNB, Dhaka

BNP yesterday termed the government's allegation of recruiting lobbyists abroad to campaign against Bangladesh "baseless" and "fabricated".

It's the Awami League government that has been engaging lobbyists for the last 14 years to cover up its misdeeds, said BNP standing committee member Dr Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain.

He was speaking to reporters at Chandrima Udyan after paying tribute to BNP founder Ziaur Rahman on his 86th birth anniversary.

On January 17, State Minister for Foreign Affairs Shahriar Alam told the parliament that there was evidence of how much

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Senior BNP leaders place a wreath at the grave of party founder Ziaur Rahman marking his 86th anniversary yesterday.

PHOTO: COLLECTED