



In the absence of this bamboo bridge that connects Banasree and Aftabnagar, one would have to make a journey of at least a kilometre and a half around Rampura. Sensing this, residents of housing societies from both sides agreed to build this bridge to save commuters from all that trouble. What's even more interesting is that the bridge falls right on the border of the two city corporations, as Banasree falls under DSCC and Aftabnagar under DNCC.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Ethical recruitment is the answer

Speakers tell discussion on labour migration

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Cooperation among different stakeholders at both sending and receiving ends is required to ensure ethical recruitment practices in labour migration, said speakers at a consultation meeting yesterday.

Mentioning that the government cannot bring down migration costs alone, they said transparency and accountability of recruiting agencies have to be ensured to end exploitation.

The meeting on "Ethical Recruitment and Zero Cost Migration in the Context of the 8th Five-Year Plan" was jointly organised by International Organization for Migration (IOM), Daily Samakal and The Daily Star at Samakal's office in the capital.

Addressing the programme, migration expert and former foreign secretary M Shahidul Haque said there has to be a strong monitoring system, which will be



PHOTO: STAR

overseen by the government.

A migrant worker after returning home finds himself or herself in a vulnerable situation. The situation of those who return home after job loss abroad is even more vulnerable, he said.

Safe, orderly, regular and well-managed migration benefits migrants and their families as well as sending and receiving countries, said Fathima Nusrath Ghazzali, officer in charge of IOM Bangladesh. "IOM, in this context, strongly supports initiatives to improve migration management in Bangladesh," she said.

Expatriates' Welfare Minister Imran Ahmad said his goal is to implement initiatives that will protect and uphold migrant workers' rights.

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A Tk 4cr experiment with public money!

Biman to operate 'experimental commercial' flight to Toronto tomorrow; 64 govt officials, family members out of total 100 passengers

- ▶▶ Flight to cost Tk 4cr
- ▶▶ Regular flights may take another 2 months
- ▶▶ 36 of 100 passengers are general people
- ▶▶ Rest are govt officials, family members
- ▶▶ Will take around 18 hours to reach Toronto
- ▶▶ Addl 2-hour fly time needed to avoid Russian air space



RASHIDUL HASAN

Without completing all required procedures, Biman Bangladesh Airlines is going to operate its first flight on the long awaited Dhaka-Toronto-Dhaka route tomorrow.

The flight is being termed an "experimental commercial" flight by the national carrier, whose sources said it might take more than two months to start regular flights on the route.

But this has raised questions from various quarters, which is seeing this as a "controversial decision", especially as the experimental flight is slated to cost Biman Tk 4 crore in public money.

The amount was revealed by Mahub Jahan Khan, Biman's director of corporate planning and training, at a press conference at a city hotel.

Canadian high commission in Dhaka organised the press conference for the inaugural direct flight to Canada from Bangladesh.

Interestingly, only 36 of the 100 passengers on the experimental flight are general people, Mahub said, while the rest are government officials and their family members.

The flight will carry at least a 55-member delegation to Canada for the appointment of a general sales agent and consultation with Transport Canada Civil Aviation (TCCA) and other related issues.

The delegation includes officials of Biman, the Civil Aviation Ministry and the Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh (CAAB).

Family members of several top officials, including State Minister for Civil Aviation M Mahub Ali, are also among the delegation.

The flight is set to depart from Dhaka airport at 11:30pm on March 26.

Due to the ongoing Russia-Ukraine war, an additional two-hour fly time will be required to avoid the Russian air space, meaning it will take around 18 hours to reach Toronto. The number of general passengers in the return flight is 19 so far.

Biman insiders said promotional flights are usually not conducted until all formalities to officially launch the flight are completed, saying that it will still take more than two months to finish the necessary paperwork for that.

At the press conference, the state minister for civil aviation was asked about allegations against Biman for launching the flight without full preparation. In response, he said it was their long cherished dream to launch the flight on this popular destination, saying that operating flights on the route is also a prestige issue.

"We opted to inaugurate the flight on the country's Independence Day, March 26, to mark the remarkable day," he added.

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Triumphs and hurdles on the road to justice

Looking back at successes, failures of war-crime trials

ASHUTOSH SARKAR

Twelve years have passed since trial proceedings against crimes during the Liberation War began. Looking back, the government has had significant success in ensuring justice for the victims, after the formation of International Crimes Tribunal (ICT) 1 and 2, but has failed in some respects as well.

Trying war criminals was a vital electoral pledge of the Sheikh Hasina-led government. Two war-crime tribunals have so far delivered 44 verdicts, punishing 107 war criminals. Six of them have been executed, after the apex court affirmed their death penalty.

However, the Pakistani high command and anti-liberation organisations, which were directly involved in committing crimes during the Liberation War, could not be brought to justice.

The two tribunals have sentenced 72 war criminals to death and 35 to different terms of imprisonment, including life term, ICT Registrar Mesbahuddin Ahmed told The Daily Star yesterday.

He said 18 appeals, filed by convicted war criminals against ICT verdicts, are now pending with the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court.

Five convicted war criminals – Ghulam Azam, Abdul Alim, Abdus Sattar Pyada, Syed Mohammad Qaisar and SM Yousuf Ali – have died in custody, when their appeals were pending

“Although the government has had some success in ensuring justice, it has not taken any initiative to try Pakistani high command and anti-liberation organisations, which has frustrated justice seekers, including families of the victims and 30 lakh Liberation War martyrs.

SHAHRIAR KABIR
Liberation War researcher

with the Appellate Division.

Since the last amendment to International Crimes (Tribunals) Act-1973 – which has provisions for only putting individuals on trial – in February 2013, the government has been saying that amendments would be made to facilitate trials of anti-liberation organisations.

The law ministry prepared a draft to amend the law in 2014, but over the last eight years, no visible steps have been taken to pass the amendment.

Eminent writer and war-crime researcher Shahriar Kabir told The Daily Star that although the government has had some success in ensuring justice, it has not taken any initiative to try Pakistani high command and anti-liberation organisations, which has frustrated justice seekers, including families of the victims and 30 lakh Liberation War martyrs.

It is possible to try Pakistani high command in absentia for its crimes against humanity, even if they do not respond to the trial notice. If this is done, the martyrs' souls and families will at least get some peace, he said.

The Appellate Division and ICT have not been hearing and disposing of war-crime cases for a long period due to the pandemic, he mentioned.

Shahriar said it is great that nearly 100 percent of war crimes, cases that have been disposed of so far, have been proven in trials.

Contacted recently, Law Minister Anisul Huq said it is a success of the Hasina-led government

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PRAYER
TIMING
MAR 25

	Fazr	Juma	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
Azan	4-45	12-30	4-45	6-20	7-45
Jamaat	5-20	1-15	5-00	6-25	8-15

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

'Ensure rights of minorities'

Oikya Parishad submits memorandum to PM

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Hindu-Bouddha-Christian Oikya Parishad yesterday submitted a memorandum to the prime minister, demanding that the ruling Awami League materialise their election manifesto on protecting the minorities.

Three presidents of the Parishad – Nim Chandra Bhowmik, Nirmal Rozario and Ushaton Talukder – general secretary Rana Dasgupta and four other members of the organisation submitted the memorandum to the prime minister's Office with signatures of two-lakh people.

Prior to that, they held a brief rally at Shahbagh. Rana Dasgupta read out the memorandum at the event.

He said they have made demands. All the demands were included in AL's manifesto, which were announced before the last national election.

The demands are immediately enacting minority protection law, forming a national minority commission, enacting a law on eliminating discrimination, proper implementation of Hill Tracts Peace Accord and a Hill Tracts Dispute Settlement Commission and a minority ministry.



PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

Police intercept a procession of Bangladesh Hindu-Bouddha-Christian Oikya Parishad in Shahbagh area as they were heading towards the Prime Minister's Office to submit a memorandum yesterday. Afterwards, an eight-member team of the Parishad went to the PMO and submitted the memorandum.

Equal share for women

Speakers tell seminar on land, inheritance rights

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

There are around 8,49,000 female labourers in Bangladesh, 78 percent of whom are involved in agriculture.

Of them, 45.6 percent of female agricultural workers do not get any wage.

The rest of the 54.4 percent of female workers get paid at a much lower rate than the market standard.

The alarming numbers came to the fore in a seminar titled "Ending discrimination and partiality and establishing equal rights of men and women in land, agriculture and property: Responsibilities of the state and the citizens".

The event was held at CIRDAP Auditorium in Dhaka yesterday.

Roshan Jahan Moni, deputy executive editor, Association for Land Reform and Development (ALRD), said, "Female farmers do not have any recognition as farmers. They are not included in the training programmes and they are not getting smart cards issued by the government for farmers. If they want to apply for government khas land, they have to apply jointly with

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