



On the first day of Ramadan yesterday, Dhaka's usual gridlock took an even more gruesome face, as commuters rushed to their homes from work to join their families for iftar. This photo was taken in Tejgaon area.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

## Chattogram-Kathmandu flights from April 7

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Himalaya Airlines, a private air operator of Nepal, is going to operate flights on Chattogram-Kathmandu route from April 7.

Md Moniruzzaman, director of SAir Air BD Ltd, general sales agent of Himalaya Airlines, told The Daily Star that the airlines will initially operate weekly two flights on this route.

This will be first ever direct flight on this route.

At present, the Nepalese airline is operating seven weekly flights on Dhaka-Kathmandu-Dhaka route, the airlines said.

Moniruzzaman said initially they are operating the flight on Chattogram-Kathmandu-Chattogram route considering Bangladeshi migrant workers. "But in the long run, we are targeting to bring Nepalese people to visit Bangladesh, especially Cox's Bazar," he said.

## PRAYER TIMING

APRIL 4					
Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha	
AZAN 4:31	12:45	4:45	6:19	7:45	
JAMAAT 4:41	1:15	5:00	6:29	8:15	

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

## SEHRI, IFTAR TIMING

RAMADAN	APRIL	SEHRI	IFTAR
2	4	4:26	6:19
3	5	4:24	6:20
4	6	4:24	6:20

# New rail line to link SHARIATPUR

Proposal for feasibility study submitted to BR

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

Bangladesh Railway (BR) is considering linking Shariatpur district headquarters with the railway network to implement the government's plan of taking railway services to all districts.

Chief engineer's office of BR [west zone] has already submitted a proposal for carrying out a feasibility study for constructing a 24-kilometre rail line from Janjira to Shariatpur and a railway junction at Janjira.

A committee led by BR Director General Dharendra Nath Mazumder will hold a meeting on Thursday to examine the proposal, said BR sources. The move comes months before the government plans to open the Padma bridge, which will connect the Mawa and Janjira end of the river.

Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader yesterday reiterated that the long-cherished bridge would be open to the public by June this year.

Currently, BR is implementing a Tk 39,246.79 crore Padma Bridge Rail Link Project to build a 169km rail line from Dhaka to Jashore through the Padma bridge.

There will also be a station at Shariatpur's Janjira point.

While visiting the railways ministry in October 2014, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina instructed the authorities concerned to bring all districts under the railway network.

Currently, 44 districts are under the 3,000km network of BR.

Besides, a lawmaker from Shariatpur in December 2020 sent a semi-official letter to the railways ministry, asking to expand the rail network to Shariatpur district headquarters under the Padma Bridge Rail



### AT A GLANCE

- Proposal for feasibility study submitted to BR
- Study to cost around Tk 9cr
- Project evaluation committee

meeting Thursday

- Janjira to become railway junction
- 24km rail line from Janjira to Shariatpur to be built

Link Project, according to sources.

However, BR found that no new work can be incorporated into the rail link project, which is being implemented by China Railway Group Ltd under a commercial contract.

Under the current circumstances, BR's planning cell in June last year asked the chief engineer of BR's west zone to prepare a project for carrying out a feasibility study for the line and a junction at Janjira.

Contacted, Chief Engineer Monirul Islam Firoji said they have already sent a proposal to the BR headquarters. Replying to a query, he said the study would cost around Tk 9 crore.

Another top railway official said the move is still at a very preliminary stage and would require more time.

He said once the project is approved by the DG-led committee, it would go to the railways ministry for approval. After the railways ministry approves the proposal, it would be sent to the planning ministry.

The feasibility study would start after the planning minister's approval. If the project is found to be feasible, BR will have to take another project building the line and the junction said the official under anonymity.

"This is a long process," he added.

Contacted, the BR DG said they have taken the move as per their plan to bring all districts under the railway network.

"If we find the project to be feasible, then we will move forward with it," he told this correspondent yesterday.

## Three killed in Magura road crash

UNB, Magura

Three people were killed and 12 others injured in a collision between a battery-run auto-rickshaw and a bus in Mohammadpur upazila of Magura yesterday.

The deceased are auto-rickshaw driver Rabbi (22), Jashim (24), and Nirmal Kumar Biswas (60).

Ikram Hossain, officer-in-charge (OC) of Mohammadpur Police Station, said the accident took place around noon near Kanutia on Mohammadpur road.

The auto-rickshaw was hit by the bus coming at high speed from the opposite direction, leaving around 15 people injured.

Among the injured, four were rushed to Magura Sadar Hospital where the doctor declared Rabbi and Jashim dead, said the OC. Nirmal succumbed to his injuries on the way to a Jashore hospital.

The vehicles were seized, however, the bus driver managed to flee the scene, he said.

A case was filed with Mohammadpur Police Station in this regard, he added.

## JS passes Boilers Bill

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Boilers Bill, 2022, which aims to check boiler-related accidents and ensure a safer work environment, was passed in the parliament yesterday.

Industries Minister Nurul Majid Mahmud Humayun placed the bill that will replace the Boiler Act, 1923.

As per the bill, anyone who operates boilers without taking prior permission will face imprisonment of maximum two years or maximum Tk 2 lakh fine or both.

The punishment is the same for tempering the license of any boiler.

For transferring or handing over boiler to another person, the punishment is imprisonment of maximum one year or maximum Tk 1 lakh fine or both.

For building boilers without permission, the punishment is imprisonment of maximum two years or maximum Tk 2 lakh fine or both.

After any boiler accident, the user has to inform the authorities concerned immediately about the cause. For failure, they will be jailed for maximum two years or imposed maximum Tk 2 lakh fine or both.

## LAUNCH FIRE SCARE

## Passengers' panic eased due to a prompt response

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barishal

In the wake of the multiple launch accidents within the last few months, passengers were panicked after a dense smoke came out of a launch's silencer pipe at Munshiganj terminal on Saturday night.

Prince Awlad-10 was going to Barishal from Dhaka. The incident took place when the vessel crossed the Munshiganj berthing point, prompting some of its passengers to call the national emergency number 999.

Eventually, the launch was anchored at the Munshiganj terminal as per the directions of firefighters and police. They checked thoroughly and found that nothing was wrong, so they let the launch go to its destination.

Barishal River Port Officer Mostafizur Rahman said the launch was anchored there for two hours.

Mahfuzul Haque, manager of Prince Awlad-10, said the silencer was new and such an incident occurred when it became heated.

## This Ramadan, take a loss to save humanity

Jashore sees initiative to provide daily essentials to lower, middle-income groups at lower prices

MOKAMMEL SHUVU

With the advent of the holy month of Ramadan, prices of essential commodities see a hiking trend – a common phenomenon in the country for quite some years now.

To put a stop to the unfair practices of profit mongering at the cost of people's well-being, Idea Samaj Kalyan Sangstha, a voluntary organisation, launched their journey "Loss Project" in Jashore town on Tuesday. They started an outlet selling essential food commodities to people belonging to the lower- and middle-income groups way beneath the market prices.

"People belonging to these income groups cannot make ends meet with their limited resources. They can't even go from door to door asking for help. Our effort aims to get them some relief from the worry from the soaring prices," said

Hamidul Haque Shaheen, chief adviser of the organisation.

Their outlet at Idea Pitha Park in Jashore's Kharki area has all essential commodities, including rice, onion, potato, soybean oil, date and rice.

The package of commodities costs Tk 555, while the market price is Tk 940.

"We identified 472 families in Kharki who needed the assistance and gave them cards. Each family can buy up to four packages until Eid each week," said Hamidul. The outlet is open every Sunday and Tuesday from 3:00pm to 7:00pm.

Students who run the Idea Pitha Park – a local food corner – donate 35 percent of their profit to the project, according to Hamidul. "We get donations from other well-wishers as well," he said.

"We can avail the package of the daily essential food items at half the market price. This is a huge relief to us," said Rita Khatun, a homemaker from Kharki.



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PHOTO: COLLECTED

## Marie Stopes opens three pharmacies

CITY DESK

Marie Stopes Bangladesh, a well-known healthcare service provider for women and children, has initiated three model pharmacies at different cities on Saturday.

The pharmacies are located at Dhaka's Mirpur, Gazipur, and Sylhet – adjacent to its three maternity hospitals, said a press release.

Marie Stopes has 40 clinics in 28 districts including seven maternity hospitals.

Officials said they want to provide a one-stop treatment solution and ensure the access to quality medicines preserved at the right temperature and dispensed by registered pharmacists. Marie Stopes Bangladesh is an affiliate of Marie Stopes International.