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## JOURNEY HOME FOR EID Smoother than expected

No tailbacks on highways; long queues at ferry terminals

STAR REPORT

Congestion on highways during the Eid rush has not been as bad as feared earlier with thousands leaving the capital yesterday without much trouble.

But those having to travel across the Padma and the Jamuna suffered in long tailbacks at the ferry terminals.

The journey on highways has been comparatively smoother this time partly because one or more members of many families had already left the capital for their hometowns much ahead of the Eid vacations.

**"I did not face tailbacks on Dhaka-Aricha highway, but had to wait for three hours to board a ferry."**

However, at Paturia and Shimulia ferry terminals on the Padma river, vehicles, mostly cars and microbuses, remained stranded for hours yesterday. Tailbacks were also seen near the Bangabandhu bridge over the Jamuna river.

"I did not face tailbacks on Dhaka-Aricha highway, but had to wait for three hours to board a ferry," said Jashim Uddin, who was going to Kushtia by a car.

Since buses and smaller vehicles wait in two separate lines at the ferry terminal and there are far more cars than buses, those travelling by the latter could board the ferries within a short time.

At Paturia ferry terminal in Manikganj, almost 800 small vehicles were seen waiting for a ferry around 5:00pm yesterday.

Meanwhile, the capital's Kamalapur Railway Station remained crowded throughout the day.

A total of 122 trains were scheduled to leave the capital yesterday. Three trains were delayed by up to one and a half hours, officials said.

People going to the southern districts started arriving at Sadarghat launch terminal in the morning. As of 8:00pm last night, 95 of the 125 scheduled launches left the terminal.

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Vehicles, including ambulances and a large number of motorcycles, are caught up in tailbacks at the Shimulia Ferry Terminal in Munshiganj around 11:00am yesterday as Eid holidaymakers started leaving the capital and its adjoining districts in droves on the weekend. Vehicles reaching the terminal from the other side of the Padma found it difficult to get off ferries due to the rush of home-goers.

PHOTO: SAJJAD HOSSAIN

## MIGRANTS' EID THIS YEAR Hope back after Covid horror

JAMIL MAHMUD

After a severe dip in his earnings in the last two years of the pandemic, Hajrat Ali, a migrant worker in Malaysia, is very happy this time as he sent home an additional amount for his family's Eid celebration.

"Although I usually remit Tk 40,000 to Tk 50,000 a month, I have sent additional Tk 40,000 so my family can take Eid preparations well," Ali said in a WhatsApp call recently.

Around the same time last year, the 49 year old from Rangpur's Gangachara upazila struggled to send regular monthly expenses to his family. He even had to borrow Tk 20,000 from his superior in Malaysia, and sent the money home ahead of Eid-ul-Fitr.

Things are better now as he is receiving the regular wage with the improved pandemic situation in the Southeast Asian country.

"I hope for a better Eid festival this

time," said Ali.

Mohammad Musa, a Bangladeshi businessman in the United Arab Emirates, said although the Covid-19 situation has improved, many Bangladeshis are yet to fully recover their losses incurred during the

**Migrant workers are gradually overcoming Covid-induced challenges and there is a "positive vibe" among them ahead of Eid.**

pandemic.

A community leader of the UAE's Ras Al-Khaimah, Musa said Bangladeshi expatriates would be able to send more money home than last year as noticed in the trend.

With the global pandemic situation eased significantly, Bangladeshi

expatriates, most of whom are low-paid migrant workers in the Middle East and Southeast Asia, are hoping for a better Eid celebration this year, leaving behind the pandemic-induced economic horror.

Bangladesh saw an increase in inward remittance in March ahead of the Arabic fasting month of Ramadan.

More than one crore Bangladeshis live in over 160 countries, according to government estimates. They send remittance – which is not only ensuring survival of their families but also considered a key pillar of the country's economy.

The country received \$1.85 billion in remittance in March this year, shows Bangladesh Bank data. The monthly amount is the highest after July last year when \$1.87 billion inward remittance was received.

As of April 21, Bangladeshi expatriates sent home \$1.40 billion

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## 50 killed as blast rips thru Kabul mosque

REUTERS, Kabul

A powerful explosion killed more than 50 worshippers after Friday prayers at a Kabul mosque, its leader said, amid a series of attacks on civilian targets in Afghanistan during the Muslim holy month of Ramadan.

The blast hit the Khalifa Sahib Mosque in the west of the capital in the early afternoon, said Besmullah Habib, deputy spokesman for the interior ministry.

The attack came as worshippers at the Sunni mosque gathered after Friday prayers for a congregation known as Zikr - an act of religious remembrance practised by some Muslims but seen as heretical by some hardline Sunnis groups.

Sayed Fazil Agha, the head of the mosque, said someone they believed was a suicide bomber joined them in the ceremony and detonated explosives.

"Black smoke rose and spread everywhere, dead bodies were everywhere," he told Reuters, adding that his nephews were among the dead.

"I myself survived, but lost my beloved ones," he said.

Resident Mohammad Sabir said he had seen people being loaded into ambulances.

"The blast was very loud, I thought my eardrums were cracked," he said.

Emergency Hospital in downtown Kabul said it was treating 21 patients wounded in the blast and two patients were dead on arrival. A nurse at another hospital, who declined to be identified, said it had received several wounded in critical condition. A health source said hospitals had so far received at least 30 bodies in total.

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Miners stage a demonstration at an entrance to Barapukuria Coal Mining Company Limited in Dinajpur's Parbatipur demanding arrears and reinstatement. About 700 contractual miners have been jobless for over two years since the pandemic hit the country in March 2020. Another group of about 400 miners, not in picture, protested inside the company compound demanding they be allowed to work an eight-hour shift every day. The demonstrations continued for the third straight day yesterday, but the authorities could not care less.

We will not let Russia intimidate or blackmail their way out of these sanctions.

US President Joe Biden as Moscow blocks gas to two Nato nations



**WR1**  
New Market violence  
All down to pent-up grievances



**ABUL MAAL ABDUL MUHITH**  
(1934-2022)

## The passing of an icon

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Former finance minister AMA Muhith breathed his last at a hospital in the capital at 12:56am today.

He was 88.

He had been undergoing treatment at the United Hospital in the city.

Finance Minister AHM Mustafa Kamal and Planning Minister MA Mannan expressed condolences over the

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**'Please show him arrested'**

**Wife of missing man pleads with law enforcers, says he was picked up April 19**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A woman says her family cannot trace her husband after law enforcers in plainclothes picked him up from their home in the capital's Shewrapara on April 19.

At a press conference, organised at the Dhaka Reporters' Unity yesterday, Farida Yasmin Nejhun pleaded that the missing man, 44 year-old Mohammed Mohasin, is at least shown arrested in any case.

Seeing one's loved one being arrested and thrown into jail is devastating, but for Nejhun, this is the least she asks for, as the alternatives can be even worse – not knowing where he is, or whether he is alive or not.

Mohasin was picked up from their house by men who introduced themselves as members of a law enforcement agency, Nejhun said at the conference.

"It was around 2:45am. A group of six to seven men, all in plainclothes, came in three microbuses and banged on the main gate. As the landlord of our house met them at the gate, he was told that an arrest warrant for my husband has been issued against his village address in Bhola," she said.

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