

## HC to get new judges soon

Move taken to resolve judge shortage, dispose of cases faster

ASHUTOSH SARKAR

Several new judges are likely to be appointed to the High Court within a few weeks to resolve the shortage of judges and increase case disposal rate.

"The new judges may be appointed to the High Court in 10 to 15 days. The president will make the appointments in line with the chief justice's recommendations," Law Minister Anisul Huq told The Daily Star yesterday.

The minister, however, did not give details about the matter.

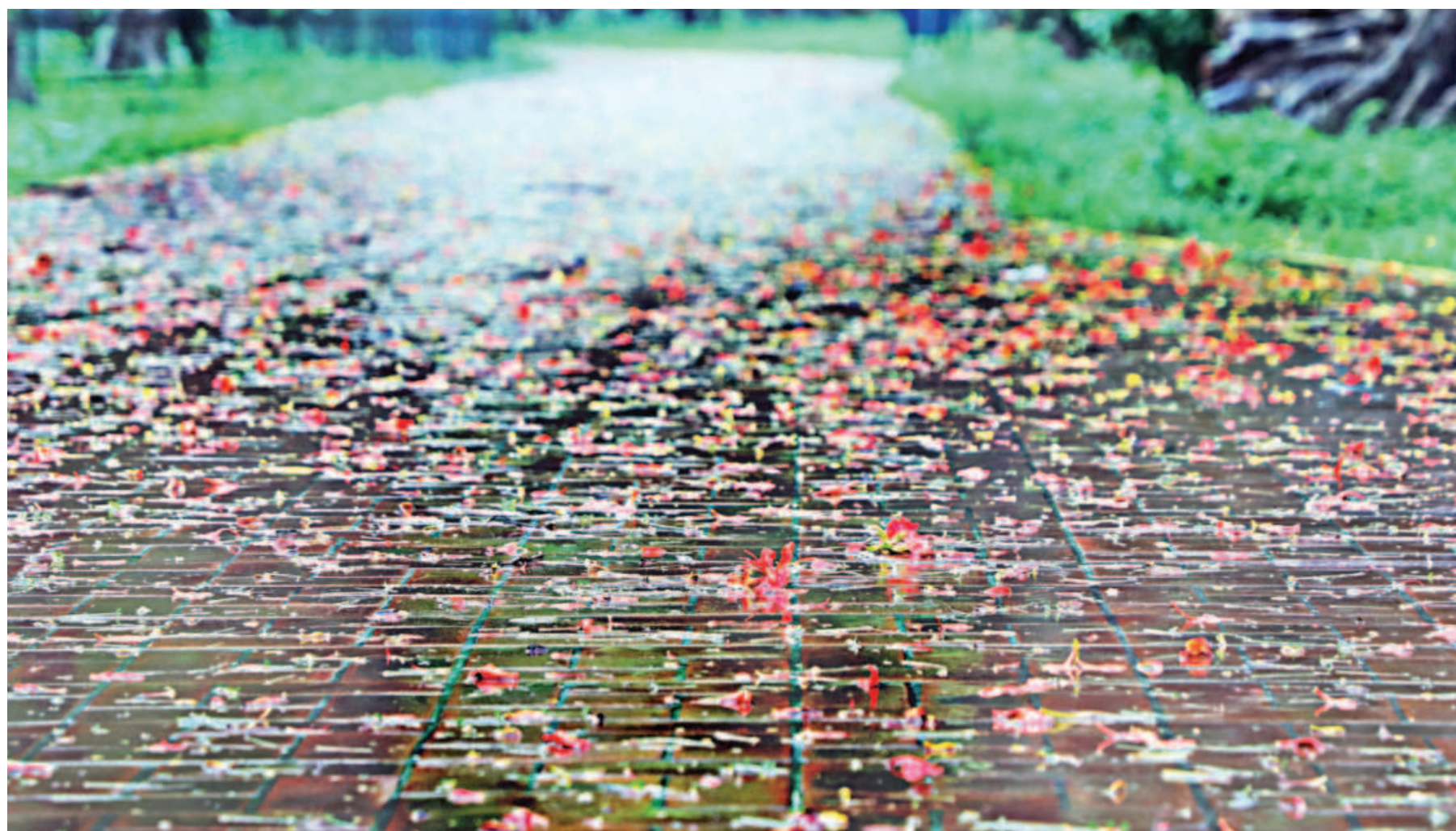
The HC has been facing a shortage of judges. In contrast, the shortage of Appellate Division judges has been fulfilled to some extent after the appointment of four new judges on January 10.

The HC's crisis started following the retirement and death of some judges and elevation of four judges to the Supreme Court. This resulted in a huge backlog of pending cases, said SC sources.

Currently, the number of HC judges is 86, down from 101 in 2012. Seven judges, including Chief Justice Hasan Foez Siddique, are now serving at the Appellate Division; the number was 11 in 2009.

Among 86 HC judges, three have been performing duties as judges of the International Crimes Tribunal, hearing and disposing 1971 war crimes cases. Three other HC judges have not been allowed to conduct judicial functions, as an inquiry centring them has been ongoing since August 22, 2019.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6



Summer is here along with its seasonal pleasures. As the stormy winds and drizzles take the city over, the red and orange of Krishnachura beckon the people's hearts to enjoy the view across the streets. This photo was taken at Ramna Park yesterday.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

## Dedicated company to operate, maintain Padma Bridge

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government is going to form a dedicated company for operation and maintenance of Padma Bridge, which is expected to be opened next month.

In a meeting yesterday, the board of Bangladesh Bridge Authority (BBA) gave approval, in principle, to a proposal for forming the company under the agency.

Later, Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader, who presided over the meeting, told reporters that preparations are ongoing to open the bridge for the public toward the end of next month.

"We are sending a summary to the prime minister and are taking preparations so that she can inaugurate the bridge on a day preferred by her," Quader said.

Quader and top officials have long been saying that the bridge would be opened in June, but Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina last month said the bridge would be opened at the end of this year.

Yesterday, Quader said that there is no scope for confusion in this regard. "As a minister, after being briefed properly, I am saying that the bridge will be opened next month."

He said the main bridge witnessed 98 percent progress

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

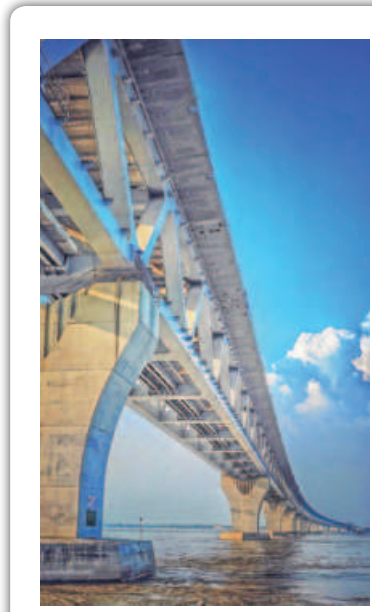


PHOTO COURTESY: SHAH ALI FARHAD

PRAYER  
TIMING  
MAY 12



	Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
Azan	4-10	12-45	5-00	6-36	8-00
Jamaat	4-45	1-15	5-15	6-40	8-30

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

## In media, it's still a man's world

Only 10pc employees female, finds study

ASIFUR RAHMAN

Only 10 percent of the total employees are female in Bangladesh's media, while only about 6 percent are in reporting, found a recent global study.

The study, titled "Gender Equality and Media Regulation Study Bangladesh", was conducted by Management and Resources Development Initiative (MRDI) in Bangladesh by surveying 18 media houses. It was initiated by Sweden's Fojo Media Institute. The lead writer and principal investigator of the study is Quratul-Ain Tahmina.

MRDI consulted and interviewed 37 individuals, including legal experts, academicians, researchers, government officials, stakeholders, editors, journalist leaders and key informant journalists, and checked with at least 20 more for supplementary information, verification and clarification. They also selected a total of 43 acts and rules, including the constitution and 12 national-level media policies, for analysis.

The study found a total of 5,950 employees in the 18 media houses, including eight national and local newspapers, seven television channels, two FM radios and an online news portal.

Among the 5,950 employees, only 612 were female. The highest number of female employees work at BTV, while the lowest number was found in Abc Radio. Among the 302 employees in decision-making roles, only 41 were female.

**Female journalists talked about gender-based harassment in newsrooms. All except a regional daily from the south-east were found to be aware of the 2009 guidelines for ending such harassment.**

Only 14 percent of female employees worked as senior content makers, while only 5.7 percent were in reporting among a total of 909 reporters. According to the study, 15 media houses reported measures to be in place for gender equality in newsrooms, without ensuring proper balance.

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- » Among the 302 employees in decision-making roles, only 41 were female
- » Only 14pc of female employees worked as senior content makers
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Maternity leave was found to be provided by all except two organisations. A northern regional newspaper did not provide maternity leaves for their female employees, while another one chose to abstain from answering the question. Other issues included drop-off services from late evening onward and separate washroom facilities.

However, the number of separate washrooms is still inadequate. The study also found inclusive toilets to be rare, which is a necessity to make the industry accessible for non-binary individuals.

Female journalists who were interviewed talked about various types of gender-based harassment in newsrooms. All except a regional daily from the south-east were found to be aware of the 2009 guidelines for ending abuses and harassment of women at workplaces.

Two newspapers and two TV channels, including BTV and a radio outlet, reported forming the mandatory complaint redress committee and provided disaggregated numbers of committee members. However, all except for five organisations said they had not received any formal complaint of this nature in the last five years. Meanwhile, none of the 18 organisations has childcare facilities at work.

The study recommended formulation of anti-discrimination and gender-equality laws, encompassing public and personal spheres.

## 'Go slow with subway plan'

BBA tells authorities, after proposal to form separate company was placed

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

The government is taking a "go slow" policy for its plan to build a subway for Dhaka city and adjacent areas, which aims to ease traffic congestion and improve communication.

A proposal for forming a separate company for the subway's operation was placed before the board meeting of Bangladesh Bridge Authority (BBA) yesterday.

But the board, with Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader in the chair, did not give the go ahead, asking relevant authorities to "go slow" with the move, meeting sources said.

**DMTCL is now building a metro rail line. Subway construction will deteriorate traffic movement. Besides, it would require a huge amount of money, so authorities will go through with the move once funds are managed.**

A MEETING PARTICIPANT

The government has plans to build an underground railway network, with 258 kilometres of tracks in Dhaka. As per the draft feasibility study revealed in March this year, there will be 11 subway routes in the city and its outskirts. The routes will be constructed in three phases.

It would require \$41,306 million for constructing four routes running for around 105 km in the first phase.

Around \$34,477 million would be needed for building four other routes in the second phase during the period 2030 to 2040, and around \$27,025 million for constructing another three

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4



One of the things that makes the scorching summer heat bearable is the expectation of mangoes. Lately, the city's markets were seen filled with different varieties of the fruit cultivated all over the country. This vendor, for example, was spotted in Gulistan yesterday selling Gobindobhog mangoes for Tk 100 per kilo.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

## DAMAGE TO 2 BOEING AIRCRAFT

# 5 Biman officials suspended

RASHIDUL HASAN

Biman Bangladesh Airlines has suspended five of its officials and staff for their involvement in damaging two Boeing aircraft on April 10.

The suspended are principal engineer Mohammad Badrul Islam; three engineer officers Md Mainul Islam, Syed Bahaul Islam and Selim Hossain Khan; and GSE operator Md Hafizur Rahman, said Biman Managing Director and CEO Abu Saleh Mostafa Kamal.

The Biman boss told The Daily Star that actions were taken against them based on report of the investigation committee formed by the civil aviation and tourism ministry.

According to the investigation report, the five were held responsible for flouting section 55 of the service rules of Bangladesh Biman Corporation Employees (1979) Regulations.

The national-flag carrier formed two committees and the ministry formed one following the incident at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport on April 10.

On April 10, Biman's Boeing 777-300ER, while entering the hanger, strongly collided with Boeing 737-800, which was already there.



As a result, the radome and front bulkhead of the 777 aircraft and the horizontal stabiliser on the left of the 737 aircraft were partially damaged. The two Boeing aircraft, however, came into operation within three days thanks to the efforts of Biman's engineers and Boeing, said Biman on April 14.

Ali Naser, chief engineer (quality assurance) of Biman, headed a four-member investigation committee, while another of Biman's committee was headed by the chief of safety. The civil aviation ministry also formed a four-member probe committee.