

## DHAKA

## Don't harass passengers

State minister for civil aviation tells immigration police, warns of tough action

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

State Minister for Civil Aviation M Mahbub Ali yesterday asked the immigration police not to question passengers unnecessarily during immigration at the Dhaka airport.

He also instructed the immigration authorities not to interrogate all passengers.

The junior minister said around 21,000 passengers travel through this airport every day. Only those who need to be questioned should be interrogated.

Mahbub Ali said this while talking to reporters after visiting Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport. He also spoke to passengers about the quality of service and their problems.

He said stern actions will be taken against airport officials or employees for their negligence in carrying out their responsibilities and in case of harassing passengers.

He said he has talked to custom officials at the airport to ensure that all passengers' bags are not checked. Only those who are suspected, based on information, will be checked. Only 1 to 2 percent of the passengers will be checked separately.

Mahbub said preparations are ongoing to launch e-gate at the airport soon.

Regarding the ground handling service at the airport, he said the civil aviation ministry has formed a team who will visit the airport three days a week to oversee the

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The Daily Star Editor and Publisher Mahfuz Anam presents a replica of the first issue of the newspaper to Chinese Ambassador Li Jiming after the envoy paid a courtesy visit to The Daily Star yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

## 'Boycott the profiteers'

CAB urges people

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Consumers Association of Bangladesh (CAB) yesterday urged people to boycott fraudsters, hoarders and profiteers.

The association said Directorate of National Consumer Rights Protection is not enough to protect consumer rights, so there should be a separate ministry in this regard.

It demanded at least a "consumer rights" division under a ministry.

The Consumers Association of Bangladesh made the demands at a webinar titled "Consumers are victims of profiteering and fraud".

In the keynote speech, CAB vice president SM Nazer Hossain said it has been observed that the number of unethical business people is increasing, and nobody is being able to control them.

"Before festivals like Eid and Puja, we see businesses announcing big sales worldwide, while the situation is reversed here," he said.

"Here, we see traders competing to increase prices of all commodities," he added.

Adulteration is the most dangerous practice among traders, Nazer said.

"We see them adulterating food with chemicals and colours... They increase transport fares, produce fake products with original seals, manipulate weight

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**"We see them adulterating food with chemicals and colours... They increase transport fares, produce fake products with original seals, manipulate weight machines and so on. The consumers don't get justice."**

SM NAZER HOSSAIN  
CAB vice president

	Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
Azan	4-05	12-45	5-00	6-40	8-00
Jamaat	4-40	1-15	5-15	6-45	8-30

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

## Move part of Sadarghat terminal

Taposh asks BIWTA

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC) Mayor Sheikh Fazle Noor Taposh yesterday requested Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority (BIWTA) to shift a part of Sadarghat launch terminal, which is now in front of Lalkuthi and Ruplal House, to another location to protect the history and heritage of Dhaka.

The DSCC mayor made the request while delivering his speech at a programme on Lalkuthi premises.

Taposh said the Buriganga and its adjacent historical sites are inaccessible to people due to their occupation by

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Two schoolgirls squeeze through a narrow space on a footpath, which has been occupied by parked rickshaws. Not just the footpath, a part of the road beside it has become a parking spot for the three-wheelers, leaving no room for pedestrians to walk with ease. This photo was taken on Green Road yesterday.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

## Biman to use own planes for hajj flights

Decision may cause disruption on various routes

RASHIDUL HASAN

Biman Bangladesh Airlines has decided to operate this year's hajj flights with its own aircraft, scrapping its earlier plan to ferry pilgrims in leased aircraft.

The latest decision of the national flag carrier may cause disruption in its flight operation on various routes, according to Biman sources.

Besides, Biman will also have to reduce the number of flights on different routes, they further said.

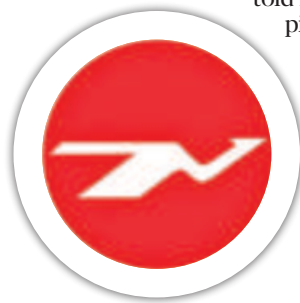
According to aviation experts, Biman's plans to operate this year's hajj flights has shown a lack of

**"It's [operating hajj flights] a matter of two months. There will be no major disruption to the scheduled flights. The frequency of flights to Middle Eastern countries will not be reduced."**

MD MAHBUB ALI  
State Minister for Civil Aviation and Tourism

## AT A GLANCE

- ▶▶ Four Boeing 777s to be used
- ▶▶ 75 dedicated trips for 28,792 hajj pilgrims
- ▶▶ Scheduled to start on May 31
- ▶▶ Less urgent regular flights to be cut down



professionalism.

Initially, Biman decided to lease two Airbus A 330s from Lithuania-based Heston Airlines, which was scrapped amid allegations of massive irregularities.

The national flag carrier was at risk of incurring a loss of about Tk 200 crore with the initial plan, according to Biman sources.

The sources also mentioned that the pair of 266-seat Airbus A330s were 13-year-old cargo planes.

Biman has now devised a new plan to operate hajj flights with its four Boeing 777s – which are usually used for flights on Doha, Abu Dhabi and Kuwait routes.

The flights are scheduled to start from May 31, said sources.

State Minister for Civil Aviation and Tourism Md Mahbub Ali yesterday at a press conference

told reporters that Biman would carry pilgrims via 75 dedicated Boeing-777 trips this year, and the decision has been finalised.

Mahbub Ali said he had asked Biman officials to ensure that passengers who had already booked tickets for Doha, Abu Dhabi and Kuwait routes are not harassed and the flight schedules are not disrupted.

He said four Boeing 777 aircraft of the 21 aircraft in Biman's fleet will be used to operate the hajj flights, like it was done back in 2019.

Biman will also reduce the frequency of scheduled flights, which are less urgent and less profitable, to different destinations, for smooth operation, the state minister for civil aviation and tourism said.

"It's [operating hajj flights] a matter of two months. There will be no major disruption to scheduled flights. The frequency of flights to Middle Eastern countries will not be reduced," he added.

Talking to this correspondent, Biman Managing Director and CEO Dr Abu Saleh Mostafa Kamal said it is true that Biman will have to reduce its flight frequency on different routes to accommodate hajj flights.

However, he claimed that this disruption will

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## All cases against Yunus, Grameen Telecom withdrawn

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

All 110 cases filed against Nobel laureate Prof Muhammad Yunus and his organisation Grameen Telecom have been withdrawn by the organisation's workers and employees, after they reached a settlement over claims of payments.

Advocate Md Yousuf Ali, a lawyer for the workers and employees, told The Daily Star that his clients had filed 104 cases with labour courts and six with the High Court, saying that Tk 437 crore of payments are due.

"As Grameen Telecom's management has agreed to pay the money, all 176 workers and employees have instructed us to withdraw the cases, and accordingly, we have done so," he added.

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## TK 304CR GRAFT CASE ACC can quiz 4 NSU trustees at jail gate: court

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday allowed the Anti-Corruption Commission to interrogate four members of North South University's (NSU) trustee board at the jail gate for one day in a Tk 304 crore money laundering case.

The four accused are MA Kashem, Benajir Ahmed, Rehana Rahman and Mohammed Shajahan.

Judge KM Emrul Kayesh of the Metropolitan Senior Special Judge's Court passed the order after ACC Deputy Director Farid Ahmed Patwary, also the investigation officer of the case, produced them before the court with a forwarding report.

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## Bangladesh role model for disaster management

State minister tells int'l conference

PINAKI ROY, from Bali, Indonesia

Over the decade, Bangladesh has earned a name as a role model for disaster management despite being one of the most disaster-prone and climate-vulnerable countries.

Bangladesh has achieved remarkable success in cyclone related disaster mortality, which has fallen from 7 digits to a single digit in the last 50 years, said Enamur Rahman, state minister for Disaster Management and Relief.

He said this in his speech on the preparatory day of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction (GPDRR) 2022, jointly organised by United Nation Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) and the Indonesian government, at Bali International Conference Centre (BICC).

Indonesian Coordinating Minister for Human Development and Culture Muhadjir Effendy inaugurated the meeting yesterday morning.

Bangladeshi state minister delivered his

speech in the afternoon on "Addressing the recovery needs of women and girls, people with disabilities and other vulnerable groups".

In the 1970 cyclone, 90 percent of the deceased were women and children. The ratio between women-children and men was 14:1, which has now been reduced to 1:1.

"This is a milestone achievement in terms of minimising the gender gap in disaster management," said Enamur.

Citing a recent study report by Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS), the minister said 75 percent of risks can be reduced through better preparedness.

Regarding Bangladesh's Covid-19 preparedness, the state minister said the humanitarian response was made with the principle of "no one will be left behind", as per Bangladesh's National Preparedness and Response Plan for Covid-19.

Bangladesh is also updating its disaster preparedness with a National Strategy on Internal Displacement Management 2021.

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