

## EID-UL-AZHA Sale of advance train tickets from July 1

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Railway (BR) is likely to start selling advance train tickets on July 1, ahead of Eid-ul-Azha, and will launch a new mobile app for selling tickets before the Eid rush.

Meanwhile, BR, for the first time in many years, will not operate any special train between Dhaka and Khulna during the rush, as authorities have presumed that the number of train passengers will go down on the route after Padma Bridge opens.

Instead, a special train will be operated either on Dhaka-Panchagarh or Dhaka-Parbatipur route. The final decision will be announced later.

All these decisions were taken at an inter-ministerial meeting held at Rail Bhaban yesterday, meeting participants said.

Railways Minister Nurul Islam Sujan, who presided over the meeting, is expected to brief media

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A van driver, carrying a large container, peddles across a wobbly, makeshift bridge over an open sewage canal, known as Gobindapur Khal. These bridges, made by locals, are merely supported by some bamboos. At any point, pedestrians who use these can fall victim to accidents. This photo was taken from Shanir Akhra recently.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

## 'Renew Odhikar's registration' Urge int'l rights orgs

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

CIVICUS and Asian Human Rights Commission (AHRIC) have expressed concern over revoking the registration of Odhikar, a leading human rights organisation.

The decision to not renew the registration stemmed from an unproven allegation that the organisation published misleading information about rights violations and extrajudicial killings, which tarnished the government's reputation, reads a statement.

The NGO Affairs Bureau canceled Odhikar's request to renew its registration on June 5. "This cancellation is another shameful stain to the already appalling human rights record of Bangladesh."

It sends a chilling message that civil society groups and rights defenders who speak up on rights issues will be intimidated and silenced.

Government must reverse the decision and take steps to create an enabling environment for civil society to undertake work without reprisals.

**PRAYER  
TIMING**  
JUNE 15

Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN 4-05	12-45	5-00	6-50	8-15
JAMAAT 4-40	1-15	5-15	6-55	8-45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

## Where are our public spaces?

HRISHIK ROY

With the growing population and the ever-increasing pollution, Dhaka has evolved to be a chaotic place to live in, with little to no public space for citizens.

But what qualifies as a public space? Or the lack thereof?

"Any place where people from all walks of life have open access is a public space in my opinion," says Fahad Al Mahmood, a recent graduate from Dhaka University.

"However, public spaces, in the most conventional sense, are quite insufficient in the capital," he adds.

"A park and a few benches in your neighbourhood are the least you can expect from a nation's capital," comments Tajrian Khan, a high school student.

Being able to go to restaurants, cafes or amusement parks is something which can only be afforded by people from a certain socioeconomic background. This leaves out those at the bottom of the social order.

This crisis has also put city planners and

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## EVOLUTION OF CYBERCRIMES (PART 2)

# Tale of vile discoveries

Criminals on cyber space developing new techniques every day

MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN

Gone are the days when extortionists and blackmailers would take advantage of people's religious beliefs and superstitions and extort money from them by pretending to be "Djinn er Badshah" -- the king of genies -- over the phones.

Extortions in cyberspace saw a radical change with the rise of various social media and online messenger sites.

"Criminals do not use the same techniques anymore after potential victims become aware of the trend," said SM Ashraf Alam, special superintendent (investigation and operation) of Cyber Police Centre of Criminal Investigation Department.

For example, there is a group of hackers who use different "voice changing software" to turn male voices into female ones. They use this to find their targets on the messenger app "imo".

The targets unknowingly fall into the trap that the hackers lay for them, disguised as an intimate relationship. They send different app download links and deceptively collect the OTP (One Time Password) from their targets to hack the accounts.

Following the hack, they collect personal information from the hacked accounts, with which they later blackmail the targets and extort them.

These methods came to the fore following the arrest of nine such imo hackers on May 22.

The innovations don't end there. Turns out, when it comes to cybercrime, the actors are way ahead of their times with whatever resources they can avail.

In another venture, criminals were found using alert notifications from banks to extort people.

For example, a system notification is sent to the user's phone number after depositing a bank's CDM (Cash Deposit Machine).

However, the money is only taken into account for deposition after verification from a bank official.

This lag is what criminals take advantage of.

Disguised as police or army officials, they make online orders for products and ask traders for their bank account numbers with CDM facilities.

That is when the trick begins. Going to the CDM point, they input the demanded amount on the machine, but only insert an empty envelope.

Soon after, a text message is sent to the account holder's number confirming the transaction, after which, the syndicate collects the products from them.

### CLASSIFICATION OF CYBERCRIMES

- Cyber stalking, profile hacking
- Cyber bullying, photo morphing
- Offer, shopping, dating scams
- Info theft, link baiting
- Cyber terrorism

SOURCE: CTC

The bank, as per procedure, notifies the trader of the empty envelope a day after. By then, the harm has already been done.

Criminals have also been found using telemedicine services for extortion, where they would take private photos from the patients during online sessions, promising them treatment for skin problems and sexual diseases, only to blackmail them with the photos after.

Four people were arrested in these connections on April 24.

### TECHNIQUES

- Software to change voice
- Deposit notification to cheat people
- Bkash application login loopholes in iPhone
- Fake online telemedicine service
- Embezzling money from int'l brokerage house
- Hacking supershop website, issuing fake discount card

Junaed Alam Sharker, DB additional deputy commissioner, said, "We are identifying evolving cybercrime techniques every time. All of us need to be aware before clicking on any new link or installing a new app."

Meanwhile, criminals have found a loophole in iOS -- iPhone's operating system -- to hack bKash accounts. Android phones don't allow logging into a bKash account with different numbers. However, the same can be done on iPhones.

Six arrests were made by DB in this connection in March.

On August 8 last year, CTC unit arrested three for swindling a huge sum of money by hacking into several local and international websites, including a leading Bangladesh airline and super shop.

Three months later, on November 20, CTC unit arrested another two from Sirjaganj for hacking into an international brokerage house and embezzling a huge sum of foreign currencies.

According to the database, around 4,245 cases were received by Dhaka's cyber

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## LAUNDERING OF TK 2,000CR Mohtesam the mastermind: HC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday observed that Khandaker Mohtesam Hossain Babar, brother of former LGRD minister Khandaker Mosharrar Hossain, is the mastermind behind the laundering of Tk 2,000 crore.



"It has been evident from the confessional statements given by other accused that Mohtesam used to run a syndicate. His activities have tarnished the image of the government and country as he had given shelter to other accused and he was their consultant."

"He is a ringleader. He used to collect commissions from tenders floated by the offices of the LGRD ministry," said the HC bench of Justice Md Nazrul Islam Talukder and Justice Kazi Md Ejarul Haque Akondo.

They said this during a hearing on a rule issued earlier following Mohtesam's bail petition, which the bench rejected due to the gravity of the offence.

The bench passed the rejection order considering that the petition was not presented properly before it as his lawyer Syed Mizanur Rahman told the bench during one point of the hearing that his client will not run the bail petition.

Deputy Attorney General AKM Amin Uddin

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## DIGITISING JUSTICE SYSTEM Integrity of info vital: speakers

STAR REPORT

Ensuring the integrity of information is a must to digitally transform the justice system in Bangladesh, said speakers at a roundtable yesterday.

They said a digital justice system will not be sustainable if relevant people cannot access it easily. Besides, creating mass awareness about the benefits of digitising the judiciary is needed.

The event was jointly organised by UNDP Bangladesh and The Daily Star at The Daily Star Centre.

Some judicial proceedings were held digitally during the pandemic's peak, but a complete "e-judiciary", which covers everything like filing cases, taking testimonies and producing the accused, is needed, speakers said.

Lawmaker Shamim Haider Patwary said strong political will is a prerequisite to develop the e-judiciary.

Mohammad Golam Sarwar, assistant professor of Dhaka University, said data protection, and right to privacy and security deserve utmost attention while promoting the digital justice system.

The proposed data protection bill as well as rules and regulations relating to online media must not be contradictory to the constitutional stipulations of freedom of speech and expression, he said.

Imposition of 15 percent VAT on laptop imports and 10 percent advance income tax on broadband internet services and mobile phones in the latest budget is totally contradictory to digital transformation in the justice system, he added.

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There's a myriad of issues plaguing the road underneath Mayor Hanif Flyover, for which, it remains mostly clogged throughout the day. The most pressing one is the illegal occupation of half the road by vendors and human-hauliers. This photo was taken from Gulistan yesterday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

## All set to hold Cumilla city polls Says EC Alamgir

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Election Commission took adequate measures to hold the Cumilla City Corporation and other local elections in a free and fair manner, said Election Commissioner Md Alamgir yesterday.

He said the commission is holding its first major election after taking office and it does not want any untoward incident centring the polls.

Alamgir made the comment ahead of elections to Cumilla city, 132 union parishad, five municipalities and several other by-elections to the upazila and other local bodies to be held today.

Many believe that the Cumilla city election and other polls are the litmus test for the EC that can gain people's faith by holding them in credible manner.

"Many people believe many things. We will not term it as a litmus test or any other test. It is our duty to hold free and fair election. We will perform our duties properly to hold a free, fair and acceptable election," he said.

He said EC installed CCTV cameras in and outside polling stations as there are common allegations of violence during the polls and capturing of polling centres, and barring voters from going to centres.

"Each and every election is important to us," Alamgir said.