

NAGAR PARIBAHAN

100 buses on 2 more routes from tomorrow

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

When the first batch of buses, launched in December last year to introduce a new system in the capital's bus service, are struggling to provide expected services, two more routes are going to be brought under the system from tomorrow.

The new routes -- one from Ghatarchar

buses, procured in 2019, for the other route, said officials.

Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader will inaugurate the services from Bosila tomorrow. Two mayors of the Dhaka city are expected to join the programme.

The service was supposed to be introduced on September 1.

The new routes -- one from Ghatarchar to Demra Staff Quarters (route-22) while another from Ghatarchar to Kadamtali (route-26) in the capital -- will be launched with 50 buses on each route under the name of Nagar Paribahan.



to Demra Staff Quarters (route-22) while another from Ghatarchar to Kadamtali (route-26) in the capital -- will be launched with 50 buses on each route under the name of Nagar Paribahan.

Obhi Enterprise, a private operator, will provide 50 brand new buses for the Ghatarchar to Demra Staff Quarters route while state-run Bangladesh Road Transport Corporation will provide 50

The move came around 10 months after the authorities launched bus services on Ghatarchar to Kanchpur route under "single company, single-route" formula, with an aim to bring discipline to the city's transport system.

Currently, around 5,000 to 6,000 buses are being operated under over a hundred companies on around 400 routes, many

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3



PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

After waiting for a long time in traffic, a child falls asleep in her mother's lap, completely drained of energy. Gridlock was seen throughout the Dhanmondi area yesterday as students and guardians of Viqarunnisa Noon School blocked Mirpur Road in Dhanmondi-7, following a "rumour" that the local branch of the institution will be shifted from the area. This photo was taken on Mirpur Road in the afternoon.

Earning crores by breaching govt system

DB arrests 4 for illegally changing vaccination info, NID and birth certificate details

MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN and MOUDUD AHMED SUJAN

It only costs Tk 2,000 to get the username and password of an administrator of the Surokkha website/app, which is used to register for Covid jobs and verify vaccination status.

Using the information, a gang has been changing vaccination details of any person in exchange for money, regardless of whether that person has taken the vaccine or not.

For the service, the gang charges only Tk 300 to 400.

Besides, the group, with support of a contractual employee of National Identity Registration Wing, also would change names and provide new NIDs within days, only for Tk 100.

The gang would post advertisements on social media and messaging apps about providing NIDs, birth certificates, and Covid-19 certificates within a day. In the advertisement, they mentioned that they are capable of changing the name on birth certificates issued from any union parishad across the country for Tk 600.

Through the process, these criminals have embezzled crores.

In the last six months, the gang members have made transactions amounting to Tk 1.3 crore, bank statements show.

The Cyber and Special Crime Division of police's Detective Branch (DB) disclosed the information to The Daily Star recently, following the arrest of four gang members, including the contractual employee of the national identity wing.

The arrestees are Md Sanowar Kabir, the employee; Ekram Hossain (20) and Jahidul Islam (19), both HSC students; and Md Abbas Uddin (28), a madrasa student.

While monitoring its online criminal activities,

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

Tk 898cr project okayed to revive 4 DHAKA CANALS

REJAUL KARIM BYRON AND HELEMUL ALAM

The government has approved a project to revive four canals of Dhaka to reduce the capital's waterlogging woes.

The Tk 898.73-crore project was okayed by the Executive Committee of the National Economic Council meeting yesterday, chaired by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.

The canals are Kalunagar, Jirani, Manda and Shyampur under Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC). Total length of the canals is 19.78 km, of which, Kalanagar is 2.4 km, Jirani is 3.9 km, Manda is 8.7 km and Shyampur 4.78 km.

The canals will be freed from encroachers and pollution, according to the project insiders.

Besides, 38.06 km of boundary walls, 36 pedestrian bridges, 19 bridges for vehicular movement, 10 public toilets, 32.44 km walkways, four plazas, bicycle lanes and 771 lights will also be set up as part of the project.

The project was sent to the planning commission in September 2021 and is scheduled to be completed within December 2024.

Planning Minister MA Mannan at a press briefing after the meeting said these canals are polluted and buildings were constructed over them.

Saying the canals will be recovered and cleaned, the minister added, "We approved this project on a priority basis. The DSCC mayor will have to implement it."

A feasibility study of the project has already been carried out, he added. Echoing the same, Md Mamun Al Rashdi, secretary of planning division, said the prime minister stressed the importance of canals at the meeting.

Khairul Baker, DSCC engineer and project coordinator, said all groundwork has been completed and works will start upon receiving



Canals: Kalunagar, Jirani, Manda, Shyampur

- Total length: **19.78km**
- Project cost: Tk **898.73cr**
- Time of completion: **Dec 2024**

PROJECT AT A GLANCE

- **38.06km** boundary walls
- **36** pedestrian bridges
- **19** vehicle bridges
- **10** public toilets
- **32.44km** walkways

a written notice of the Ecneec approval.

He said they will recover the canals from encroachers and also carry out a cleaning and excavation programme.

DSCC and Dhaka North City Corporation formally took over the responsibilities of 26 canals and 10 kilometres of box culverts from Dhaka Wasa on December 31, 2020, aiming to reduce waterlogging.

Of them, DSCC took charge of 11 canals.

Few months after this development, DSCC Mayor Sheikh Fazle Noor

Taposh told The Daily Star that they have taken short-, mid- and long-term plans for reviving the waterbodies.

"We will initially revive four canals under our long-term plan -- Manda, Kalunagar, Jirani and Syampur -- which play a vital role in the city's drainage system," he said.

Apart from the canal project, Ecneec also approved a Tk 122.03-crore project titled "Improving the Reliability and Safety on National Highways Corridors of Bangladesh by Introduction of Intelligent Transport System".

Women can perform hajj, umrah without blood relatives

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A woman pilgrim no longer requires a mahram (blood relative) to accompany her if she wishes to travel to Saudi Arabia to perform hajj or umrah.

Saudi Minister of Hajj and Umrah Tawfiq Al-Rabiah made the announcement at a press conference at Saudi embassy in Cairo on Monday.

The minister brought to end the lingering controversy over whether any woman pilgrim requires a mahram, the Saudi Gazette said in a report.

Talking to this correspondent, M Shahadat Hossain Taslim, president of Hajj Agencies Association of Bangladesh, yesterday said the new announcement will bring about a positive change.

Every year, Bangladeshi women face difficulties while arranging a mahram.

On top of that, the women usually need to bear all expenses of the mahram. In 2019, around 1.27 lakh Bangladeshis were allowed to perform hajj.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

Not bothered by it Says CEC on shifting NID job to home ministry

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief Election Commissioner Kazi Habibur Awal yesterday said the issue of shifting all services relating NID cards from the Election Commission to the home ministry was solely a government matter. The government is going to give the job of issuing national identity (NID) cards to the home ministry, taking away the responsibility from the EC.

On Monday, the cabinet approved in principle the draft of the National Identity Registration Act-2022 on conditions that some of its provisions would be reviewed and some sections of the existing law would be added to it unchanged. "If the NID jobs goes to anyone... this is not our [EC's] matter. This is matter of the government, parliament and state. We are not bothered about it," Habibur said.

"Voter list will remain with us... the Election Commission will have a transparent voter list. We will conduct the election with the voter list. We will

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF THE GIRL CHILD

Youth takes charge of Norway embassy for a day

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Baishakhi, a youth activist from Dhaka, took over the Norway Embassy in Bangladesh for a day yesterday to advocate for access to education, and equal opportunities for girls, especially for those belonging to underprivileged communities.

Baishakhi, the Norway ambassador to Bangladesh for the day, who is also a graduate-sponsored child of Plan International Bangladesh, said girls can become anything they want if they have equal opportunities.

"Every household in marginal communities need to be made aware of gender issues, girls' rights, and harmful gender norms. Only then will girls achieve equality," she added.

Baishakhi, with her leadership skill, has been motivating her community to discard prejudices against LGBTQ+ community. She also advocates for higher education of the girls in her community by influencing the parents.



"As an ambassador, I would like to assert the need for continued commitment to girls' education and gender equality, especially in underprivileged communities like mine," she said.

The takeover was a part of the global #GirlsTakeover campaign, a signature

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

Dengue death toll **74**Total number of cases **21,870****1,826** still undergoing treatmentNumber of recovered patients **19,303****677** more hospitalised yesterday

SOURCE: DGHS

PRAYER TIMING OCTOBER 12

Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha
AZAN 4:45 12:45 4:15 5:45 7:15
JAMAAT 5:20 1:15 4:30 5:50 7:45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION



A girl and her mother cross a narrow section of a footpath carefully to avoid falling into the gaping hole, dug up to construct a multi-storied building on the east side of Tikatuli's Haatkholra foot bridge. Without any protective barrier surrounding the development site, pedestrians are exposed to high risks of accidents. This photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN