

The ride was fast and smooth
12-yr-old passenger shares his first metro experience



Imam Hasan Eyaad (R) and Mohammad Imam Hossain.
PHOTO: STAR
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Twelve-year-old Imam Hasan Eyaad was over the moon after taking his first-ever ride on the metro rail yesterday morning. "It's very exciting. (I) can't believe that the ride was so smooth and fast," Eyaad exclaimed after reaching Agargaon station at 10:15am. "It was my first metro trip," he added.

A resident of Uttara Sector-15, Eyaad along with his grandfather and cousin started from home around 7:45am. After waiting for 55 minutes in the queue at Uttara North Station, they got inside the platform. There too, they had to wait for an hour for tickets before boarding the train around 10:00am.

"My grandfather planned our metro ride on Wednesday night after seeing

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3



The endless lines and technical glitches couldn't dampen the festivities surrounding the metro rail, which was made open to the public yesterday. Passengers were full of excitement and curiosity before boarding the train, and the joy didn't go down during the short but delightful journey.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5



3,857 people took metro on the first day

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A total of 3,857 passengers journeyed on the metro yesterday, the first day the country's metro rail service was opened to public.

The metro rail completed 50 trips, 25 each from both the Agargaon and Uttara ends, between 8:00am and noon, MAN Siddique, managing director of Dhaka Mass Transit Company Ltd, responsible for operating metro rails, told The Daily Star.

Of the passengers, 3,756 used a single-journey pass, 99 used multiple-use MRT pass and two used the rapid pass for the service, he added.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on Wednesday inaugurated the metro rail service.

'Recognise war children'
Demands Naripokkho



Speakers at the press conference yesterday.

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Women's rights organisation Naripokkho yesterday called for solidarity with war children of the country and demanded Bangladesh to recognise them.

Speakers also demanded an amendment to the citizenship and guardianship act to allow women to be sole guardians of a child.

Naripokkho, along with representatives from other rights-based organisations, organised the press conference at the Naripokkho seminar room in the capital's Dhanmondi area.

Speaking at the programme, Shejuti Nure Maksudat said, "Birangana -- the war heroines in our country -- were recognised as freedom fighters after a long time. They are still facing problems to be gazetted in the list."

"Like them, their children -- who were born out of rape during the Liberation War -- have been suffering from an identity crisis, as our country is yet to recognise them officially," she said.

"We want to say that they are our children, and it is our global call to all civil society to work unitedly to uphold their rights," she added.

Naripokkho member UM Habibun Nesa said, "After the war, the Birangana had to go

through a long series of untold and unbearable sufferings. While some were abandoned, others were rejected or disowned by their families and society."

The children also went through the same type of discrimination. Most of the children who stayed in Bangladesh were abused and humiliated in society, she added.

Shireen Huq from Naripokkho said, "The recognition of the Birangana was one of the significant decisions taken just after the war in 1971. However, this recognition became a burden for them in society. We, from Naripokkho, want them to be treated with respect," she added.

Speakers at the programme also demanded the amendment to the existing citizenship and guardianship act.

Lawyer Robiul Hasan Mojumdar, who is associated with BLAST, said, "In the Citizenship Act 1951, women can not identify their children as Bangladeshi unless their husbands have citizenship. On the other hand, mothers are not recognised as the primary guardian, unlike the fathers, under the existing guardianship act."

Speakers from the programme called on all rights-based organisations and concerned individuals to take a unified stance on this issue.

Labour migration to see 82pc increase

Says RMMRU report about this year's overseas employment

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

With over 10.29 lakh migrant workers going abroad till November, overseas employment this year is likely to see nearly an 82 percent increase compared to last year, says a new report by Refugee and Migratory Movements Research Unit (RMMRU).

Last year, 6.17 lakh migrant workers went abroad for employment, says the report, titled "The Patterns and Trends of Labour Migration from Bangladesh in 2022: Achievements and Challenges", conducted using government data.

RMMRU shared the report during a press conference in the capital's Jatiya Press Club.

RMMRU Founding Chair Prof Tasneem Siddiqui said about 79 percent of migrant workers this year have gone abroad as "less-skilled" workers.

Most people who collected visas through family connections migrated as "less-skilled" workers, she said.

She stressed that the government needs to put more focus on developing the skill-sets of workers, and it is working to this end.

If vocational training and certifications under those projects are sped up, it will be possible to send skilled and semi-skilled workers again, she added.

Prof Tasneem also mentioned that as this year, Bangladesh saw a significant jump in overseas employment, it is likely that its positive impact will be seen in the

remittance inflow next year.

For a fresh migrant, it requires at least six to 12 months to settle down in the host country and then start sending remittance home, she added.

The report says as of November this year, 99,684 female workers have gone



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PROF TASNEEM SIDDIQUI
RMMRU founding chair

abroad. At the end of the year, female migration is likely to see a 35.7 percent increase.

It also mentions that the wage earners' welfare board has brought back the dead bodies of 3,222 migrant workers from abroad this year as of November.

Addressing the press

missions abroad and the expatriates' welfare ministry must take a collective effort in preparing an accurate record of the deaths of migrant workers.

The real reasons behind the deaths also need to be known and attempts of appropriate action should be taken where necessary, he added.

'Advance passenger info' to bolster air travel security

CAAB inks deal with UAE

RASHIDUL HASAN

To bolster security for air travel, Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh (CAAB) is going to set up Advance Passenger Information (API) system, which can catch unauthorised travel and use of fraudulent documents.

Once the API system is implemented, it will be easier to fight crimes like terrorism, money laundering, and drug smuggling. At the same time, immigration and customs clearance procedures for legitimate travellers will be faster and easier, said CAAB officials.

To set up the system, CAAB signed a memorandum of understanding with the United Arab Emirates on Wednesday at its headquarters in the capital's Kurmitola.

API will be set up under CAAB, while Emirates Technologies Solutions -- a company wholly owned by the UAE government and supported by multinational company SITA -- will be responsible for installation, operation and maintenance.

Through the system, the identity information of passengers and crew members arriving in Bangladesh will be sent electronically in advance and in real-time to immigration authorities.

The system is capable of "risk analysis" based on passenger data and national and international watchlists. The scope of this risk analysis is expansive. Even possible differences in spelling of names and other information are examined.

As a result, immigration authorities will have time to prepare in advance against the arrival of unwanted or dangerous passengers. They will even

Through the system, the identity information of passengers and crew members arriving in Bangladesh will be sent electronically in advance and in real-time to immigration authorities.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

Pro-AL panel sweeps Duta polls
Nizamul new president, Zeenat secretary

DU CORRESPONDENT

Pro-Awami League "blue" panel had a landslide victory in the Dhaka University Teachers' Association (DUTA) election yesterday.



The panel got 14 posts in the 15-member committee, while the "white" panel backed by BNP Jamaat secured the vice president post.

Prof Nizamul Hoque Bhuiyan of the Institute of Nutrition and Food Science was elected president and Prof Zeenat Huda of the sociology department general secretary.

Prof Mohammad Lutfor Rahman of statistics was elected vice president from the "white" panel.

The other winners are treasurer Masudur Rahman, joint secretary Prof Abu Khaled Mohammad Khademul Haque, and members Zia Rahman, AJM Shaiful Alam Bhuiyan, Amzad Ali, Chandra Nath Podder, Sharmin Musa, Md Kamrul Hasan, Sharif Akhtaruzzaman, KM Saiful Islam Khan, Maksudur Rahman and Mohammad Ali Akkas.

Faculty of Pharmacy Dean Prof Sitesh Chandra Bachar functioned as the election commissioner during the polls, held between 10:00am and 2:30pm at Dhaka University Teachers' Club.

Dengue death toll **281**

Total number of patients **62,321**

359 still undergoing treatment

Number of recovered patients **61,681**

65 more hospitalised yesterday

SOURCE: DGHS

PRAYER TIMING

DECEMBER 30

Fazr	Juma	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN 5:30	12:30	4:00	5:27	7:00
JAMAAAT 6:05	1:15	4:15	5:30	7:30

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

'Making plans in India to rob shops in Bangladesh'
DB arrests six members of robbery gang in Dhaka

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police's detective branch claimed to have arrested six members of a gang that has been robbing jewellery shops using bombs and firearms for over a decade.

The gang has been active in different areas of the country.

A DB team arrested the six -- including ringleader Hasan Jomaddar alias Lengra Hasan, 34 -- from the capital's West Rampura area on Wednesday.

Harun Or Rashid, additional commissioner (DB) of Dhaka Metropolitan Police, disclosed this while addressing a briefing at the DMP media centre yesterday.

The other arrestees are Md Arif, 26, Md Aynul Haque alias Bhola, 42, Saiful Islam Montu, 45, Ansar Ali, 50, and Md Shaheen, 35.

A firearm, two rounds of bullets, five machetes and a car have been seized from their possession.

Police arrested them while investigating a robbery incident at a jewellery shop in Khilgaon. "Ringleader Hasan has been committing robberies using guns and bombs for the last 10 years," said Harun, quoting the arrestees.

He claimed that Hasan used to plan robberies with his associates while staying in India. "After fixing the date and time, Hasan would return to the country and meet up with the gang for the robbery. After robbing a place, he would divide the loot among members and flee to India illegally through the border in Brahmanbaria."

Hasan has a citizen card of India. "His passport has been blocked at immigration. For that, he used

to cross the border illegally," said Harun. He said for robberies, the group rents houses around the target area.

"Gang members then collect information about the targeted shop... The group attacks shops by exploding bombs and firing blank shots to create panic," said the official. "Within six to seven minutes, they disappear after looting gold ornaments."

The group has conducted at least 25 to 30 robberies in Dhaka, Keraniganj, Feni, Munshiganj, Manikganj, Mymensingh, and Bogura. Hasan was shot in the leg while robbing a jewellery shop in Chattogram in 2012. He is wanted in at least 17 cases, Harun said.

Police said the gang sells looted ornaments to some shops in the capital's Tantibazar gold market.

60 eminent citizens demand Fakhrul's release

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Sixty eminent citizens including former and current teachers of various universities have demanded release of imprisoned BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir.

In a joint statement released yesterday, the signatories stated that they have come to know from family sources that Fakhrul is ill and doctors have advised him to go abroad for treatment.

"We, friends and well-wishers of Fakhrul are concerned about his wellbeing," the statement said.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6