

Biman makes changes in key posts

RASHIDUL HASAN

Biman Bangladesh Airlines has brought changes in two major posts, a move that will benefit passengers and make the national flag carrier more efficient, according to insiders.

Capt S Hossain, who was chief of planning and scheduling department, has been replaced by Capt Ishtiaq Ahmed, said Tahera Khondoker, general manager of Biman's public relations.

Several Biman pilots told The Daily Star yesterday that there were allegations against Hossain, specifically for harassing female cockpit crew.



In September last year, nine out of 15 female cockpit crew members of Biman alleged that their bosses at the scheduling department discriminated and harassed them so much that it even jeopardised flight safety on at least one occasion.

They said the work environment has become hostile due to intentional discrimination, harassment, regular verbal abuse, and deprivation of promotions and training opportunities.

This has caused the female members to be under tremendous stress and some have even quit Biman, the nine said in their first group report -- Confidential Report

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The little one was all dressed up for the occasion and her grandfather was quite happy to take her for a ride on the metro rail yesterday. The two went to the Mirpur-10 metro rail station in the morning and patiently waited in line in front of a counter to purchase tickets. People of all ages queued up at the Mirpur-10 station, which opened to the public yesterday.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

Metro now stopping at Mirpur-10 station

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Mirpur-10 became the fifth metro rail station to be opened to public yesterday, two months after the inauguration of the country's first metro rail service in Dhaka.

Metro rail has started picking up and dropping passengers at the Mirpur-10 station from yesterday morning.

The station was opened to commuters at 8:30am, Nasir Uddin Ahmed, director (operations and maintenance) of Dhaka Mass Transit Company Limited, told The Daily Star.

On Tuesday, MAN Siddique, managing director of Dhaka Mass Transit Company Ltd, said authorities would open all nine stations between Uttara and Agargaon within March.

Siddique said they would announce the dates

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Mixed reactions mark the first day BR starts implementing new ticketing system



STAFF CORRESPONDENT

There were mixed reactions on the first day of Bangladesh Railway implementing its move to make pre-registration with NID cards or birth registrations mandatory for intercity rail travel.

While many passengers welcomed the initiative -- taken by BR to prevent black marketing of tickets -- others, especially those from the lower income groups, found the process complicated.

A huge number of passengers thronged the single "help desk" set up at the Kamalapur Railway Station to get registered and buy tickets.

Railways Minister Nurul Islam Sujan, who visited the station to see the rollout of the new system, said there may be problems at the beginning but the authorities will evaluate them and take corrective measures.

The minister on February 15 announced that they would make preregistration mandatory from March 1.

As part of an upgraded ticketing system, all passengers have to register with BR's ticketing system online, and through an app or mobile SMS using their NID cards or birth certificates. Foreigners can register using their passports.

It will be compulsory for passengers to have originals or copies of their NIDs, birth certificates or passports while travelling on intercity trains.

Each registered individual can purchase up to four tickets, but will have to travel along with the three others for whom he or she bought the tickets.

As BR opens advance tickets five days before the journey date, the new system went live five days ago.

However, many were not aware of the system. While visiting the station in the morning, this correspondent found a huge crowd before the single help desk.

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Take action against single-use plastic

Environment ministry urges govt offices

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change has asked all government offices at the district level and coastal areas to take measures for stopping the use of single-use plastic.

Issuing a circular yesterday, the ministry requested respective offices to hold regular meetings with stakeholders to increase awareness about plastic and polythene pollution.

Contacted, Dr Syed Shahjahan Ahmed, deputy secretary at the environment ministry, said the ministry held a virtual meeting with deputy commissioners in January to curb the use of plastic and polythene.

In January 2020, the High Court issued a directive to the Department of Environment (DoE) to put an end to the use of single-use plastic in hotels, motels, and restaurants in coastal areas within two years.



A recent study by the civil engineering department of Chittagong University of Engineering and Technology (Cuet) says Chattogram city produces 249 tonnes of plastic waste every day -- 56 percent of which remains uncollected. Most of them are sachets, single-use utensils, and personal-care items.

The hazardous effects of plastic -- particularly single-use plastics -- on ecology, aquatic and marine life, soil fertility, agricultural production, and human health and safety are violating citizens' constitutional rights to life, health and environment, according to the rights organisations which filed the petition with the HC.

In the petition, they also said Bangladesh generates around 3,000 tonnes of plastic waste every day, quoting the DoE.

A joint study carried out by the DoE and Waste Concern found that 36 percent of plastic wastes are formally recycled, while 39 percent are dumped in landfills. The remaining 25 percent leaks into the environment, eventually flowing into the Bay of Bengal through the rivers.

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Samrat's bail extended till April 9

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday extended bail of expelled Jubo

League leader Ismail Hossain Chowdhury Samrat until April 9 in a case filed for laundering around Tk 222 crore and channeling it to casinos in Singapore and Malaysia between 2011 and 2018.

Judge (in charge) Md Iqbal Hossain of the Special Judge's Court-6 passed the order after Samrat's lawyer Afroza Shahanaz Parvin Hira submitted an application, seeking extension of bail in the case.

The lawyer also submitted another petition, seeking an adjournment of the charge framing hearing in the case.

Samrat was present at the court during the hearing.

On August 22 last year, the same court granted ad-interim bail to Samrat considering his health condition.

In the order, the judge said Samrat will have to submit his passport to the court while furnishing his bail bond.

Ismail Hossain Chowdhury Samrat walked out of jail following the bail order.

He had been taking treatment at Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University since then.

Some parts of Dhaka to be without gas supply today

UNB, Dhaka

Gas supply will remain suspended for eight hours -- from 2:00pm to 10:00pm -- today for all kinds of consumers in different areas in Dhaka due to emergency tie-up works of pipelines.

The areas include Minto Road, Eskaton, Pirbagh, Habibullah Road, Karwan Bazar, Old Elephant Road and areas adjacent to BSMMU, BRDEM Hospital, Dhaka Club, Holy Family Hospital, Dhaka University and Buet, said the Titas Gas Transmission and Distribution Company Limited.

Regretting for the temporary inconveniences the Titas Gas authorities said the consumers in other adjacent areas may also experience low pressure in gas supply.

Biman passengers can now change travel date online

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Biman Bangladesh Airlines has introduced an online travel-date change service for the convenience of passengers.

Passengers who purchase tickets online (airline website and mobile app) will now be able to change their travel dates online, Biman said in a press release yesterday.

They can change the dates through Biman's website (biman-airlines.com) or mobile app by paying the specified fee using the bank card or mobile-banking account used at the time of purchasing the ticket.

The date of travel can be easily changed by providing the necessary information in the "Manage My Trip" option on Biman's website.

Culture of impunity behind rise in abuse of house helps: MJF

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Expressing concern over the spike in cases of abuse of domestic workers, Manusher Jonno Foundation (MJF) demanded justice for the death of a 10-year-old house help in the capital's Moghbazar area.

Because the offence can be covered up using money, the crime is becoming an increasingly prevalent problem, stressed MJF in a statement yesterday.

Quoting Ain o Salish Kendra, the statement read that three child domestic workers were tortured and killed just in January this year. Among them, two were aged between 7 and 12 years and one was aged between 13 and 18 years.

Shaheen Anam, executive director of MJF, said, "We are noticing that even if criminals are caught, they are not being punished. They are getting out because of the perpetrators' power or loopholes in the law."

"This child was killed with such brutal torture that no sane person can imagine. Sixty-nine-year-old Farhad Badhan Mou, who has been accused of the crime, should be looked into so that she

Due to their lack of financial resources, domestic workers are unwilling to file a lawsuit. Even if they do, they are unable to pursue it. Their impoverishment is exploited and arbitrated by their employers as well.

Quader off to Singapore for routine checkup

UNB, Dhaka

Obaidul Quader, road transport and bridges minister and general secretary of Awami League, left Dhaka yesterday for Singapore for regular health checkup.

He left Dhaka at 8:30am on a Biman flight, said a ministry press release.

Quader has gone for his routine health checkup at Mount Elizabeth Hospital and is expected to return home on March 3.



SOLUTIONS, NOT EXCUSES... With this theme in mind, Bidyanondo Foundation introduced the idea of installing colourful waste bins behind Dhaka rickshaws, which will collect, and later recycle the waste accumulated in the capital's streets. They have started piloting the project in Mirpur from Tuesday with 50 rickshaws.

PHOTO: COURTESY

Bidyanondo introduces 'Rickshaw Bin' in Dhaka

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A common excuse for littering is that there are not enough garbage bins on the streets.

But there are rickshaws all over the streets and alleys of the capital.

Why not start collecting plastic waste behind rickshaws and later recycle them?

In an effort to curb the plastic pollution in Dhaka city, Bidyanondo Foundation has started the "Rickshaw Bin" initiative.

According to a post on Bidyanondo's verified Facebook page, people can throw non-biodegradable plastic, paper and polythene waste in the rickshaw bin.

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PRAYER TIMING
MARCH 2

Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN 5:15	12:45	4:30	6:05	7:30
JAMAAT 5:50	1:15	4:45	6:10	8:00

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

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