

LARGEST ONLINE BRANCH NETWORK

Sharia'h based Islamic Banking  
through 499 Branches & 142 Sub Branches

ESTABLISHED IN 1959

LARGEST PRIVATE COMMERCIAL BANK

**পূবালী ব্যাংক লিমিটেড**  
PUBALI BANK LIMITED

64 YEARS IN BANKING

FIRST BANGALEE BANK

Mobile App: pi Banking

BANKING IN YOUR HAND

HAJJ REGISTRATION

# Quota not met after 4 deadline extensions

RASHIDUL HASAN

Even after extending the registration deadline four times, the quota for sending 1.27 lakh Bangladeshis for hajj is still to be met, prompting hajj agencies to fear losses. The “final deadline” for registration ends today.

The agency leaders have pointed to the high cost to perform hajj this year as the reason behind fewer registrations.

According to officials at the capital's Ashkona Hajj Camp, as of yesterday, around 1.12 lakh people have registered. Of the total, 9,749 did so under the government's hajj management and 1,02,759 under private management.

According to an agreement between Saudi Arabia and Bangladesh, 1.27 lakh Bangladeshis will be able to perform hajj this year.

Due to the inadequate response, the government on February 22 first extended the deadline till February 28 and then till March 7.

Even after that, authorities did not hit the quota, and so, on March 7, the religious affairs ministry extended the deadline till March 16.

Even after that deadline, 1,08,909 registered. Without finding any alternative, on March 16, the government extended the deadline for the “last time” till March 21.

Contacted, Abdus Salam Aref, general secretary of Association of Travel Agents of Bangladesh (ATAB), said although the government is saying that 1.12 lakh have registered, around 5 percent of registered hajjis will not go.

Leaders of Hajj Agencies Association of Bangladesh (HAAB) and ATAB fear that this year's quota will not be met, due to the high cost of hajj packages.

Several officials at Ashkona Hajj Camp said that the quota may be unmet by several thousands.

**A Bangladeshi will have to spend around Tk 7 lakh to perform hajj under private and government management this year, Tk 1.61 lakh more than the previous year's amount.**

“Our business will be seriously affected if we cannot fulfil the quota. Besides, failure to fulfil it will also negatively impact our country,” said the ATAB general secretary.

HAAB and ATAB leaders said despite the huge interest of people to perform hajj, fewer people have registered due to the high cost of hajj packages.

A Bangladeshi will have to spend around Tk 7 lakh to perform hajj under

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2



The queues in front of OMS trucks are getting longer by the day, amid soaring prices of daily essentials. With Ramadan just a few days away, along with buying regular items, people were seen purchasing pulses, grams and dates -- some of the must have items for the month of fasting and abstinence. This photo was taken in Shyamoli.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

Ensure access to water, sanitation to achieve SDG

Speakers tell event

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Assuring everyone has access to water and sanitation is essential for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), participants in a session said yesterday.

NGO Forum for Public Health, Bangladesh Water Integrity Network (BAWIN) and the Daily Bhorer Kagoj jointly organised the national seminar titled “Accelerating change to solve the water and sanitation crisis” at the capital's Jatiya Press Club.

The seminar was held ahead of World Water Day 2023, and it highlighted the critical importance of ensuring access to water and sanitation for all.

Speakers discussed the issue of water and


SEE PAGE 4 COL 2

PRAYER  
TIMING

MARCH 21

Fajr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN 4:55	12:45	4:45	6:16	7:45
JAMAA 5:30	1:15	5:00	6:20	8:15

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION



# No eyes on the poster boards

DNCC's initiative to install the structures failing to bear fruit



Banglamotor



Karwan Bazar

SAJJAD HOSSAIN

Despite spending Tk 1.91 crore for installing designated poster boards to keep the metro-rail pillars free of posters, the efforts of Dhaka North City Corporation seem to be falling short.

Even though many of the proposed boards were installed two months ago, they have failed to attract people's attention, according to DNCC officials.

Furthermore, the structures are reportedly not strong, so they might break apart during storms, raising the risk of accidents.

Residents and experts have raised concerns about DNCC's haphazard initiative to resolve this problem. They said DNCC is installing boards without proper planning, policy and awareness campaigns.



Farmgate

Besides, the officials have not yet decided whether they will charge money for putting up posters on these boards or for how long

can one keep their advertisements there.

According to DNCC officials, the corporation has planned to set up 100 boards around the metro-rail area and already installed 22 of them. It has already spent Tk 1.91 crore for this.

During a recent visit, this correspondent found that near the Moghbazar-Mouchak flyover, next to Eskaton Road, tea stalls have been set up covering half the board, which had no posters on it.

Near a Farmgate foot-bridge, the newly-installed board only has two posters of ruling-party leaders and two for a house rental. Below it is a garbage dump and food stall occupying half the footpath.

In Karwan Bazar area, the authorities used a tin fence to set up a board, but the structure is quite weak.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

DNCC reclaims occupied land in Mirpur

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka North City Corporation yesterday reclaimed an acre of land in Mirpur's Kalyanpur area which had been illegally occupied for over one and half years.

The eviction drive started around 10:00am and went on for almost five hours.

The DNCC plans to implement the Kalyanpur Regulating Pond Project by excavation on the reclaimed land as a part of solution to the waterlogging problem in Mirpur, said Mohammad Mahay Alam, chief estate officer of DNCC.

This eviction drive is part of an ongoing effort to reclaim illegally occupied areas under the city corporation, he added.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 7



The 15th convocation of Brac University was held at Bangabandhu Bangladesh-China Friendship Exhibition Center in Dhaka yesterday. Attending as the chief guest, Education Minister Dipu Moni conferred degrees on 4,889 students.

PHOTO: STAR

Private univs can play vital role in dev

Dipu Moni tells BracU convocation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Private universities can play a special role in developing skilled people, which is necessary for the development of the country, Education Minister Dipu Moni said.

She made the comment while attending as the chief guest at Brac University's 15th convocation ceremony at Bangabandhu Bangladesh-China Friendship Exhibition centre in Dhaka.

Dipu Moni conferred degrees on 4,889 students while 31 students received gold medals in various categories.

Convocation speaker

SEE PAGE 4 COL 7

# Don't blame the road

Says Obaidul Quader on Madaripur bus crash

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Road, Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader yesterday said the accident in Madaripur's Shibchar upazila did not occur because the road had faults.

“Every death is painful. We don't want a single death on the road. We are conveying our deepest condolences to the bereaved families and relatives,” he said in a statement issued yesterday.

Quader said Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is working relentlessly to restore order in the road and transport sector and prevent accidents.

“The much awaited ‘Road Transport Act 2018’ has already been implemented. National highways across the country are being upgraded to six lanes with service lanes in a phased manner,” added the statement.

Quader said, “Initiatives have been taken to identify accident-prone road bends. Necessary signs are being installed. Four rest houses are being constructed for goods-carrying transport drivers to rest.”

Quader, also Awami League general secretary, alleged that BNP is now using road accidents to do politics after its movements failed.

“... Even if anyone dies in a lightning strike, BNP tries to put the blame on the government. The road communication sector was the most neglected during BNP's regime,” he added.

“Besides, initiatives have been taken to increase awareness among drivers, transport workers and pedestrians. BNP is criticising the government just for the sake of criticism to achieve their political objectives,” said Quader.

# GULISTAN BLAST

## Dog awarded for heroic service



STAFF CORRESPONDENT

For the first time, a member of the Rab Dog Squad has been awarded the “Rab Director General Award” for his heroic service during the search and rescue efforts after the Gulistan blast earlier this month.

The dog named Cheetah played a critical role in recovering bodies from the damaged Gulistan building where an explosion took place on March 7, killing 24 people and leaving over a 100 injured.

The dog recovered three bodies from the spot, said Commander Khandaker Al Moin, director of Rab's legal and media wing.

The award was given at a programme marking the 19th founding anniversary of Rab and Rab Memorial Day-2023.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2