



PM arrives in Medina to attend ‘Women in Islam’ conference

UNB, Medina

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday reached Medina on a three-day visit to Saudi Arabia to attend the international conference on “Women in Islam: Status and Empowerment”.

A commercial flight of Biman Bangladesh Airlines, carrying the PM and her entourage, landed at Prince Mohammad Bin Abdul Aziz International Airport in Medina at 1:10pm local time (4:10pm Bangladesh time).

Saudi Arabia in coordination with the general secretariat of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) is hosting the conference on November 6-8.

Yesterday, the prime minister offered prayers at the Rawza Mubarak of the Prophet (PBUH) after Asr prayers. Then Sheikh Hasina left Medina for Jeddah and performed Umrah in Makkah.

Today, she will join the opening event of the International Conference on Women in Islam and deliver her speech as the guest of honour.

Besides, the PM will have separate meetings with Iranian Vice President for Women and Family Affairs Enseikh Khazali, Executive Director of OIC Women Development Organisation Afnan Alshuaiby, and Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Faisal Bin Farhan.

She will also attend the inauguration of the Women in Islam Exhibition to be arranged by Princess Noura University on the same day.

Tomorrow, the premier will offer prayers in the Masjid al-Haram.

Hasina will leave Makkah for home on a commercial flight of Biman Bangladesh Airlines from King Abdulaziz International Airport at 10:45pm local time. The flight is scheduled to land in Dhaka at 8:00am on Wednesday.

The international conference on women in Islam is being held to clarify women’s rights and responsibilities in Islam, especially women’s rights to education and work as per the teachings of Islam, with broad participation from scholars of the Muslim Ummah.

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MY DHAKA



UTTARA TO MOTIJHEEL IN 30 MINUTES

DHAKA METRO

revolutionises commuting

RBR

Traffic war for us is a real deal; any trip to anywhere around the city be it in your own car, public bus, or CNG autorickshaw, was nothing less than a two-hour horror tale of heat, dust, sound pollution, suffocation, and tiredness. And finally, when you reach your destination, you are half-dead. Today, I am happy beyond words. My trip to Motijheel was nothing short of a mega triumph.

The spirit of the commuters travelling the 20.1km distance in just half an hour, was exuberant.

Hamid, whose office is in Paltan, got dropped off at Dhaka Secretariat station and was happy that he would not have to face all the haggling and pushing and shoving in his bus rides.

“This mode of transport will help us as we will not miss work. This is for the toiling middle-class, who were hardly considered,” Hamid says as he punches his metro pass and zooms off to Paltan.

“I am willing to pay Tk 100 for my commute to work in Motijheel. It is Tk 30 more than my local bus ticket and Tk 50 more than my local train ride to Kamalapur. I am travelling in a clean carriage with air-conditioning and do

not have to face lawlessness at traffic signals and the constant honking of the car horns,” Nurul Amin, another Uttara resident narrates his first trip to Motijheel.

Huda, on the other hand, went to Motijheel to run a banking errand. He says he started at 8:00am from Uttara North, completed his task, and headed back to his office in Karwan Bazar by 11:00am. He was all glee for such an achievement.



“On other days running this errand would have taken two-thirds of my working hour,” he says.

All the commuters were in awe at how much time had been saved from their everyday life, and not to forget the relief from road rage or stress.

Merrily chatting and calculating the pros and cons of Dhaka Metro,

people from all walks of life and doing all sorts of jobs and business, concluded that the government has indeed been able to reduce the traffic woes of people.

Each train can run at a speed of 100 to 110km with 2,300 passengers and was full to the brim all the way to Agargaon, however, the opening of the new routes kept the passengers’ flow high as most office goers opted for Dhaka Metro on a day when a blockade was on-going.

“Dhaka Metro Motijheel route will run daily from 7:30am to 11:30am until further notice, while it will operate till 8:30pm in the Uttara-Agargaon section. Considering people’s convenience, the route was extended by 1.16km from Motijheel to Kamalapur. The extended portion will be completed by June 2024.

“The enthusiasm and the general public put us in a happy place because together we want to build a smart Bangladesh,” says Md Aftabuddin Talukder, project director, Dhaka Mass Rapid Transit Development Project (Line-6). The director was personally present at the Motijheel concourse to see to a smooth operation and was amazed to witness the public travel hassle-free.

Free Haridhoa river from encroachers

‘HC directs govt’

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday directed the government to evict all illegal structures constructed along the banks of the Haridhoa River in Narsingdi and to take appropriate legal action against the owners of the industries that are responsible for polluting the river and environment.

The court also ordered the deputy commissioner of Narsingdi to submit a report after complying with the directives within 30 days.

The HC bench of Justices JBM Hassan and Razik Al-Jalil passed the order during the hearing of a writ petition filed by Human Rights and Peace for Bangladesh (HRPB) in May this year.

The bench also fixed December 6 for passing further orders on this matter, HPPB’s lawyer, Manzill Murshid, told The Daily Star.

Deputy Attorney General Kazi Mynul Hassan told this correspondent that Narsingdi’s DC office has submitted a compliance report to the HC stating that illegal structures have been constructed along the riverbanks that are polluting the river and environment.

Man dies as bike crashes into tree

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jhenaidah

A man died after he crashed his motorcycle into a roadside tree in Kaliganj upazila of Jhenaidah early yesterday.

Arafat Hossain, 20, son of Abdul Quader of Balidapara village, confirmed Kaliganj Police Station Officer-in-Charge (OC) Mahbubur Rahman.

The incident occurred at Failsa Missionpara around 2:00am as Arafat was heading home on his motorbike. He suffered critical injuries as he lost control of the bike and hit a tree on the side of the road, the OC said.

On information, a team from the Kaliganj Fire Service and Civil Defence rescued him and took him to the Kaliganj Upazila Health Complex, where doctors declared him dead.

Jubo League activist dies at DMCH

He was injured in a factional clash on Friday night, said police

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Narayanganj

A Jubo League activist, who was injured in a factional clash in Rupganj upazila of Narayanganj on Friday night, died at Dhaka Medical College Hospital yesterday.

Deen Islam alias Dilip, 36, was from Darikandi area in the upazila’s Murapara union, confirmed Inspector Bacchu Mia, in charge of DMCH police outpost.

Dilip was a candidate for the post of general secretary of Jubo League’s ward-8 unit under Murapara union, said Murapara UP Chairman Tofayel Ahmed.

Police sources said a clash took place between two factions of Jubo League on Friday night over forming a ward committee.

Dilip and his friend Sabuj Ahmed were injured in the clash. Sabuj is still receiving treatment at DMCH, said police.

Rupganj Police Station Inspector Ataur Rahman said a case was filed by the victim’s mother on Saturday night.

Govt plans harsher clampdown on BNP

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Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal yesterday asked transport workers to resist those who torch their buses and trucks. “If a thief enters your house, you try to catch him; if a robber attacks your house, you try to resist; then why do you remain idle when someone torches your buses or trucks?” he said at a rally at the Mohakhali bus terminal.

“You have the right to self-defence. Don’t you have sticks? Beat them. ... It’s your source of income. They will attack [your vehicles] and you will just observe it! It should not be the case.”

Police sources said instructions have already been issued for gathering information on the “masterminds and financiers of the troublemakers” and monitoring their activities in real life and in the digital sphere.

Police officials are preparing profiles of these people, and actions would be taken against them, they said.

Arson, arrests, clash in second phase too

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Local BNP said their activists were hit by pellets as police used their shotguns, a claim police denied.

In the capital, police said three police personnel of Uttara West Police Station were hurt as BNP activists hurled two crude bombs at House Building area in Uttara.

Police detained Kazi Md Hasan, a former vice-president of Gazipur city unit Chhatra Dal, in connection with the incident.

Awlad Hossain, officer-in-charge of Hatirjheel Police Station, said two crude bombs were thrown at police vehicles from Moghbazar-Malibagh flyover around 7:30pm yesterday.

In Thakurgaon, two constables were hurt after BNP Jamaat activists hurled crude bombs when the law enforcers tried to disperse pickets who obstructed traffic at Kalirhat intersection, said police.

Three demonstrators were held.

Pickets blasted crude bombs, vandalised a truck and a police

vehicle in Ishwardi rail gate area of Pabna around 7:30pm, said Arbinda Sarkar, OC of Ishwardi Police Station.

Three crude bombs went off in Munshiganj town last night, said Aminul Islam, OC of Munshiganj Sadar Police Station.

The capital witnessed significantly lower traffic on the first working day of the week. Very few long-haul buses left the capital. However, rail communication was unhampered.

ARRESTS, CASES

Hours after Rab arrested Altaf Hossain, former home and commerce minister, from Tongi in a case filed over the vandalism of the chief justice’s residence during BNP police clash on October 28, he was produced before a Dhaka court.

The court rejected his bail petition and sent him to jail.

Although Rab claimed to have arrested Altaf from Tongi, Shamsuddin Dider, an official of BNP chairperson’s media wing, said plainclothes DB police arrested him

at his Uttara home.

A team of DB police picked up Shahjahan Omar in the capital, he added.

A Dhaka court yesterday placed him on a four-day remand in connection with a case filed over torching of vehicles in New Market area on Saturday.

Rab also arrested former Jhikargachha upazila chairman and BNP leader Sabira Nazmul Munni, 45, from Ghop area in Jashore town early yesterday in a case filed for sabotage in the district on October 31.

BNP Senior Joint Secretary General Ruhul Kabir Rizvi told a virtual press briefing yesterday that law enforcers arrested over 5,284 party leaders and activists in 122 cases across the country from October 24 until yesterday afternoon.

[Our correspondents in Bogura, Pabna, Munshiganj, Thakurgaon, Sylhet, and Noakhali contributed to this report.]

movements and take photos ...”

The police believe there could be more attacks on law enforcers and there could be strikes on police and government establishments, said sources, adding that security for key point installations, government establishments, police stations, and DCs’ and SPs’ offices have been beefed up.

The DMP yesterday asked all its crime divisions to keep ambulances, doctors, and nurses on standby.

Meanwhile, the AL is to continue its electioneering alongside countering the BNP’s programmes.

The ruling party plans to notify its nominees in advance so that it helps dissipate any possible commotion among other AL ticket aspirants and the party-sponsored candidate gets enough time to campaign, said AL sources.

They said the notifications would be issued even before the election schedule is announced.

Nat’l election

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EC’s talks. And some of the parties that joined the dialogue observed that the current situation is not conducive to a free and fair election.

According to former election commissioner Brig Gen (retd) M Sakhawat Hossain, the country is going through a political turmoil and the situation is not conducive to free and fair polls.

Election Commissioner Habib said at different meetings, all officials were given the instructions needed for holding a free and fair election.

As a constitutional body, the EC is doing everything to conduct free, fair, participatory and credible elections, he said, adding that the EC is making sincere efforts to ensure a proper atmosphere for the voters.

“On November 4, the political parties were informed about the commission’s preparations, and the commissioners listened to their suggestions. Our message to all political parties is that if there is a disagreement, resolve it and participate in the election,” he said.

Delhi pollution looms

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of the game will be decided considering the situation today.

“The ICC and our hosts, the BCCI, take the well-being of all participants seriously and are monitoring the air quality in Delhi. We are taking expert advice to assess the situation,” an ICC spokesperson told ESPNcricinfo on Saturday.

India’s capital topped a real-time list of the world’s most polluted cities, with the Air Quality Index (AQI) dropping beyond 550 on Friday, thereby falling into the ‘severe’ category. According to the Air Quality Tracking Warning system, the AQI was likely to be in the severe category until November 7.

Bangladesh had cancelled their training session on Friday as precautionary measure, but attended the practice session with masks on in the next two days despite much discomfort.

Although Bangladesh head coach Chandika Hathurusingha said that the weather condition in Delhi has been affecting both teams, he said

it is beyond his control when asked whether the team management has expressed any concern regarding the safety of the players. However, he did mention that they are conscious about the current weather condition in Delhi.

“Our doctor has kept a close eye on players. Some of the players didn’t turn up for practice as they are asthmatic, so they stayed indoors. And even for practice, we’re very conscious. We train what we have to train, and they go back into the dressing room. They don’t spend time unless they’re bowling or batting. So, we have taken some measures to minimize our exposure before the game,” Hathurusingha said yesterday.

Sri Lanka cancelled their training session on Saturday for the same reason and had a training session scheduled for last night.

It will be interesting to see whether the match eventually takes place, and if does, how the weather condition affects the players.

Normalcy returns

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However, Hassan declined to share the new proposal that would be placed in the sixth board meeting of the wage board.

At the fourth meeting of the minimum wage board on October 22, Siddiqui Rahman, the factory owners’ representative, proposed a minimum wage of Tk 10,400.

But Sirajul Islam Rony, the workers’ representative, did not accept the amount and proposed a minimum wage of Tk 20,393, which is less than the workers’ demand of Tk 23,000.

Rony told The Daily Star yesterday that he will stick to his proposed amount.

The minimum wage at present is Tk 8,300.

The workers went back to their workplaces and normalcy has been restored in the sector following the assurance of the announcement of the new wage structure on November

7, said Amirul Haque Amin, president of IndustriALL Bangladesh Council.

Basic pay should account for 65 percent of the new minimum wage, up from 51 at present, Amin said.

There should be a 10 percent annual increment, up from the existing 5 percent.

The pay grades must be brought down to five from seven, and there should be a ration card for garment workers so they can buy the basic commodities at subsidised rates, Amin added.

Amin’s recommendation is similar to Rony’s proposal to the wage board.

Of the Tk 20,393 proposed by Rony, Tk 12,462 would be basic pay, Tk 6,231 house rent, Tk 500 medical allowance, Tk 300 conveyance and Tk 900 food allowance.

Md Towhidur Rahman, president of the Bangladesh Apparels Workers Federation, also demanded a ration card for garment workers.