

কর্মজীবনের শেষে অবসরকালীন আর্থিক নিরাপত্তা নিশ্চিত করতে

পিপলস পূবালী পেনশন স্কীম

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11 int'l flights diverted from Dhaka amid dense fog

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A total of 11 international flights bound for Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport in Dhaka were diverted to different airports, including Hyderabad and Kolkata, due to dense fog yesterday.

Flight operations at the Dhaka airport were also disrupted for around six hours amid fog.

Group Captain Kamrul Islam, executive director of HISA, said the 11 flights were diverted to Sylhet, Chattogram, Hyderabad, and Kolkata airports between 4:15am and 10:15am yesterday.

The diverted flights started returning to Dhaka after the visibility became normal around 10:45am, he added.

After hovering in the sky for around 30 minutes, a flight of Saudi Arabian Airlines was diverted to Hyderabad Airport as it failed to land at HISA.

One flight each of US-Bangla, Salam Air, and Biman Bangladesh Airlines were diverted to Kolkata Airport.

The rest of the flights were diverted to Sylhet and Chattogram airports.

Meanwhile, the flight schedules of different airlines were disrupted as several flights could not take off from Dhaka airport in time due to dense fog amid the prevailing cold wave in the country.

The country's lowest temperature yesterday was recorded at 9.4 degrees Celsius in Bandarban, while in Dhaka, the lowest temperature was recorded at 13.1 degrees Celsius.

According to Bangladesh Meteorological Department's forecast, moderate to dense fog may persist across the country during the night and early morning today and may continue till noon at some places.

Air navigation, inland river transport, and road communication may face temporary disruptions due to fog, the forecast added.



Not so long ago, the strip beneath the MRT line used to be Anwara Park, crowded with visitors, especially children. However, the only open space in Farmgate now remains occupied under the buildings with blue rooftop. While locals and DNCC demand the place be restored to its original form, the metro authorities plan to turn it into a station plaza.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

Fate of Anwara Park hangs in balance

Metro rail authorities want to turn it into a station plaza; DNCC opposes plan

HELEMUL ALAM

At a time when the capital already has a scarcity of parks, playgrounds, and open spaces, yet another park is struggling to survive.

Anwara Park, in Dhaka's Farmgate, happens to be the only breathing space in the area.

Since the end of 2018, the park has been used by the Metro Rail authorities to store construction materials and for other project-related purposes.

The Agargaon-Motijheel section of the Metro Rail (MRT-6) opened to the public on November 5 last year.

While experts demanded preservation of the park, considering its location and the present condition of the city, metro rail authorities intend to turn it into a plaza or shopping complex.

"There was a plan to construct an office and shopping mall

on the land, but we have proposed to the Nagar Unnayan Committee of Rajuk to keep it as a plaza without constructing any physical structure," said Fazle

Adil Mohammed Khan, president of BIP, said the authorities concerned had earlier promised to return the place as a

Reservoir Conservation Act, 2000. According to law, changing the character of a park is not allowed, and hence the place should be kept as it was," he said.

The interest of metro rail authorities is against the existing rules like Playground, Open Space, Park and Natural Water Reservoir Conservation Act, 2000. According to law, changing the character of a park is not allowed, and hence the place should be kept as it was.

ADIL MOHAMMAD KHAN, president of BIP

Reza Sumon, former president of Bangladesh Institute of Planners.

"With some supermarkets around the place, alongside the landing station of the elevated expressway and metro rail station, a plaza should be developed in

park after using it for the metro rail project, but now they intend to construct a shopping mall there.

"The interest of metro rail authorities is against the existing rules like Playground, Open Space, Park and Natural Water

'Country now has 648 sworn MPs' Says Rizvi; BNP to observe 2-day event marking Ziaur Rahman's birth anniv

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The country currently has two parliaments, claimed BNP Senior Joint Secretary General Ruhul Kabir Rizvi yesterday.

He alleged that the members of the 12th parliament have unlawfully taken an oath at the prime minister's command without dissolving the previous one.

The 11th parliament's term ends on January 29 but the 12th parliament's MPs have already been sworn in, said the BNP leader.

"There are currently 648 sworn MPs, consisting of 350 MPs from the 11th parliament and 298 from the 12th 'dummy' parliament. Members of both parliaments can now attend parliamentary sessions called by the president. This is not constitutional," Rizvi said in a press conference at the Nayapaltn party office.

Meanwhile, Rizvi also announced a two-day programme starting today to observe the 88th birth anniversary of BNP's founder Ziaur Rahman.

"The programme will begin on January 18 at 2:00pm with a discussion at the Engineers Institute in Ramna, where BNP central leaders will participate," said Rizvi.

"On January 19, BNP leaders and activists will place floral wreaths at Zia's grave in the capital's Sher-e-Bangla

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11 MPs enough to shake up the House Says Chunnu

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

As the opposition in parliament, Jatiyo Party will do whatever it takes to ensure the accountability of the government, said JP Secretary General Mujibul Haque Chunnu yesterday.

"Wait and see what we can do in parliament to play the role of a strong opposition," he said at the JP chairman's office in Banani. "Eleven MPs are enough to shake up the parliament," said Chunnu.

Having 40 to 50 MPs from the party in parliament matters little if they do not raise their voices against the government's faults, he said.

"But you will see how the parliament will be shaking when five to 10 MPs speak boldly against the government," Chunnu added. "Jatiyo Party MPs will raise their voices in favour of the people no matter how many seats we have in the house."

When asked whether JP will be considered the opposition as 62 independent candidates may also form an opposition alliance, he said, "It is under the Speaker's jurisdiction to recognise who will play the role of opposition."

JPPP TO SIT TODAY

Meanwhile, Jatiyo Party Parliamentary Party

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15 killed, 2,200 hurt in polls violence

Says Human Rights Support Society report

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least 15 people were killed and more than 2,200 injured across the country in pre- and post-polls violence in past two months, according to Human Rights Support Society (HRSS).

During the time, over 100 people were shot, while over 350 homes and businesses were vandalised, set on fire and looted, said a HRSS press release yesterday, signed by its executive director Irajul Islam.

In the aftermath of the 12th national elections, minority communities across the country came under attacks, torture, persecution, and their houses and businesses were vandalised, set on fire, and looted, it added.

The main reason for this violence was for either voting or not voting in favour of a particular party or candidate, HRSS said.

At least seven were killed and more than 1,600 injured including around 20 being hit by bullets in sporadic incidents of violence since announcement of the polls schedule till January 6. During this time, more than 50 homes and businesses, and more than 40 polling centres were vandalised.

In Munshiganj, Barguna and Cumilla, three were killed

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POLLS VIOLENCE

15 killed, 2,200 hurt

Over 100 got shot

350 homes, businesses vandalised

From swamps to water parks

Rajuk takes up 3 projects in Motijheel, Keraniganj

DIPAN NANDY

While strolling through the Motijheel area in the capital, one might notice a swampy waterbody behind Bangladesh Bank. What was once a pristine lake is now just a garbage dumping site for some, while others have set up various establishments encroaching almost all of the waterbody.

However, there is hope. Rajdhani Unnayan

Kartripakkha (Rajuk) plans to restore the waterbody and transform it into Motijheel Park.

The proposed project spans 11.88 acres of land, with 75 percent of the area dedicated to the waterbody. The site will also feature a children's zone, a one-kilometre-long and 40-foot-wide bridge, a 2.5-kilometre walkway, a gallery showcasing Dhaka's heritage, and an eight-storey cultural centre.

Rajuk has initiated three reservoir-based projects aimed at safeguarding



the environment and water bodies in and around Dhaka, said Ashraful Islam, chief

town planner and Detailed Area Plan (DAP) project director at Rajuk.

The projects are designed to incorporate entertainment centres, commercial establishments, housing facilities, and sports amenities.

Each project intends to allocate around 70 percent of its area to waterbodies.

One of the projects, Sheikh Hasina Park, is being implemented on 532.34 acres of land centring a waterbody in Shubhadhya and surrounding areas of Keraniganj, with a proposed cost of Tk 3,689 crore. The plan includes residential plots, business establishments, playgrounds, parks, entertainment

centres, educational institutions, and workers' accommodation.

Similarly, Sheikh Russell Park will be developed on 15.01 acres of land in the Ghatarchar area of Keraniganj at an estimated cost of Tk 248 crore.

It will be entirely centring a waterbody to accommodate water-based rides, an amphitheatre, walkways, a steel footbridge, restaurants, cafes, separate swimming pools for men and women, an open green field, and a children's playground.

As part of the project, the Keraniganj highway will be widened from 25 feet to 100 feet. Rajuk aims to start work on the projects this year and complete them by 2026.

"The DAP proposes 49 water-centric parks and eight large eco-parks," said Ashraful.

Adil Mohammed Khan, executive director of Institute for Planning and Development, noted the importance of government initiatives to protect water reservoirs and urged Rajuk to outline their plans for the first five years.

He also emphasised the importance of involving general people as the major stakeholders in the projects rather than implementing them arbitrarily.