



SIPPING INTO WARMTH. Holding a warm cup with his cold palms, a man drinks tea by the roadside in the capital's Mugda area. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ

'Get rid of all rundown buses'

Jatri Kalyan Samity says govt-managed transportation key to address traffic woes

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Jatri Kalyan Samity yesterday demanded scrapping of unfit, rundown buses in the capital and introducing 5,000 good quality buses under government's management to resolve Dhaka's traffic chaos.

"In the government's new plan to bring discipline on the roads, rundown buses need to be scrapped as soon as possible and a smart transportation system styled after developed countries with affordable and safe vehicles needs to be introduced," the organisation's Secretary General Mozammel Hoque Chowdhury said at a discussion organised by Dhaka Reporters Unity.

"A new bus company needs to be introduced urgently under government's management or through PPP," he said. An

expert recruited from the international market can run this company under a government framework, he added.

"Discipline on the roads cannot be established when buses are owned by private entities," he added.

While bus owners and workers are represented everywhere, passenger representatives are absent from decision-making. The state-run bus service BRTC has also failed to operate efficiently.

Reading out a written statement, he said the government plans to invest Tk 3 lakh crore in metro rail and elevated expressways which will serve only 35 percent commuters.

In contrast, only Tk 3,000 crore is needed to procure 5,000 new buses that can transport 65 percent

passengers, he explained. "Moreover, working hours are lost due to traffic jams arising from the dominance of small vehicles like motorcycles and auto-rickshaws, which

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Redouble Rohingya repatriation efforts

Foreign minister urges at NAM Summit

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Foreign Minister Hasan Mahmud yesterday urged the international community to redouble efforts for a sustainable solution to the Rohingya issue.

He made the call while addressing the 19th NAM Summit in Kampala, Uganda.

Hasan Mahmud underscored the need for a constructive and non-confrontational dialogue approach to promote peaceful, just and inclusive societies.

He also called for



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পূবালী ব্যাংক পিএলসি
PUBALI BANK PLC

কর্মজীবনের শেষে অবসরকালীন আর্থিক নিরাপত্তা নিশ্চিত করতে

পিপলস
পূবালী পেনশন স্কীম

আকর্ষণীয় সুদহার
(৬ মাসের এফডিআরের চেয়ে ১% বেশী হারে মুনাফা)

দৈনিক স্থিতির উপর মাসিক চক্রবৃদ্ধি হারে প্রতি মাসে মুনাফা

আপনার ভবিষ্যৎ আর্থিক নিরাপত্তা নিশ্চিত করতে এবং স্বচ্ছন্দময় জীবনযাত্রার নিশ্চয়তার লক্ষ্যে পূবালী ব্যাংক নিয়ে এলো 'পিপলস পূবালী পেনশন স্কীম'।

১৮ থেকে ৫৯ বছর বয়সী যে কোনো

বাংলাদেশী নাগরিক এই হিসাব খুলতে পারবেন।

এই স্কীমে মাসিক কিস্তি বাধ্যতামূলক নয়, যেকোন সময় এবং যতবার খুশি ১০০/- বা তার গুণিতক হারে জমা প্রদান করা যাবে। কোন মাসে টাকা জমা দিতে না পারলেও জরিমানা দিতে হবে না। হিসাবধারীর ৬০ বছরে স্কীমের মেয়াদপূর্তি এবং মেয়াদপূর্তিতে এককালীন/মাসিক/আংশিক উত্তোলন সুবিধা পাবেন। আংশিক উত্তোলনের ক্ষেত্রে অবশিষ্ট স্থিতির উপর একই হারে সুদ/মুনাফা প্রদান করা হবে অথবা গ্রাহক আজীবন হিসাব চালু রেখে সুদ/মুনাফা গ্রহণ করতে পারবেন। হিসাবধারী মেয়াদান্তে ডেবিট কার্ড ও চেক বই ব্যবহারের সুবিধা পাবেন। মেয়াদপূর্তির পূর্বে যেকোন সময় হিসাব নগদায়ন করা যাবে, এক্ষেত্রে গ্রাহক জমাকৃত টাকা প্রযোজ্য সুদ/মুনাফাসহ তাৎক্ষণিক ফেরত পাবেন।

*বিস্তারিত জানতে ভিজিট করুন: www.pubalibangla.com অথবা নিকটস্থ শাখা/উপশাখা/ইসলামী ব্যাংকিং উইডোতে যোগাযোগ করুন

Stop post-polls violence

Urges Puja Udjapan Parishad

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Puja Udjapan Parishad yesterday called for an end to the post-election violence against the minority communities across the country.

They made the demand at a human chain in front of Jatiya Press Club.

Chandranath Poddar, general secretary of the parishad, said, "Communal attacks have occurred in various places -- including Sirajganj, Bagerhat, Faridpur, Jhenidah, Pirojpur, Madaripur, Kustia, Lalmonirhat, Cumilla, Thakurgaon, Gaibandha, Munshiganj. Many had to leave their homes..."

Nim Chandra Bhomik, a president of the Hindu Buddhist Christian Unity Council, said, "We have long been demanding formation of a commission for the minorities and enactment of a minority protection law, but to no avail."

Joint general secretary of the Council, Manindra Kumar Nath, said, "After every election, we face attacks on the minority communities..."

The organisation's leadership informed that human chains were formed throughout the country in response to the call of the Bangladesh Puja Udjapan Parishad.

Journalist Basudeb Dhar presided over the one formed in front of Jatiya Press Club.



PHOTO: COLLECTED

Metro at night!

First day sees huge response as service extends till 8:40pm

ARAFAT RAHAMAN

After a long wait, the Dhaka metro rail finally started running for a full day from yesterday, stretching from Uttara to Motijheel.

This brought sighs of relief to daily commuters, who had been grappling with the city's traffic congestion.

This reporter found a full house visiting several metro stations. Hundreds of commuters snaked through long queues for tickets, while others waited patiently for trains on their platforms.

At Farmgate station, Aruna Biswas, accompanied by her 11-year-old son, shared her experience, "It's quite crowded, my son can barely breathe! It was the same at the ticket counter."

"But we had to take this ride, as travelling through other vehicles would have taken much longer," she added.

This correspondent met first-time metro passenger Sabbira Easmin and her two children at Motijheel station. They couldn't contain their excitement about their journey to Mirpur 10.

"I wouldn't usually bring my sons out during rush hour, but with the metro running at night, I couldn't resist the opportunity," she said.

Tofayel Ahmed, who had been waiting at the ticketing queue with his granddaughter,



said waiting 40 minutes for tickets is a bit too much. "However, it was worth the wait," he added.

Afsar Hossain, visiting the capital's Agargaon area for a doctor's appointment, echoed similar concerns at 5:00pm.

Waiting nearly an hour for a ticket

for a journey lasting under 10 minutes is frustrating, he added. "The authorities should improve the ticketing system or add more booths," he added.

Maruf Adnan, a regular commuter, from Shewrapara station, had a different experience around 2:00pm. "I had to get off the train because it was so crowded, I couldn't even get in properly. It's unusual but I suppose it's because the metro is open for the entire day for the first time," he said.

The new schedule extends the metro rail's operation to 13 hours, divided into four segments to cater to commuters throughout the day.

The first train leaves Uttara North station at 7:10am, and the last train departs Motijheel at 8:40pm. Only MRT Pass and Rapid Pass holders can board the first two trains from Uttara North and the last two from Motijheel.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina inaugurated the Uttara North-Agargaon section of the country's first metro rail in December 2022.

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Won't leave streets until democracy restored: BNP

UNB, Dhaka

Opposition parties will not leave the streets until democracy is restored, said BNP's senior leader Dr Abdul Moeen Khan yesterday.

"We would like to say clearly that no other system except democracy will ever work in Bangladesh," he said.

Speaking at a mass signature collection programme organised by Nagorik Oikya in the capital, the BNP leader also said that the current Awami League government is ruling the country with the power of guns after usurping the state power.

"It's not only us who are saying this now. Look at media around the world and look at the statements issued by different countries about the farcical election held on January 7. They echoed what we, the democratic opposition parties, have been saying for the last few years," he said. The BNP standing committee member said it has been established at home and abroad that democracy is now dead in Bangladesh.

He said their party's only goal is to bring back democracy. "Our movement for democracy will continue... we won't leave the streets until we can restore democracy and the democratic rights of the people of Bangladesh."

The BNP leader expressed hope that every person of the country will join Nagorik Oikya's mass signature programme against the farcical elections.

Nagorik Oikya launched the mass signature collection programme in favour of democracy and to disapprove the January 7 national election in front of Jatiya Press Club.

Dengue claims two more lives

UNB, Dhaka

Two more deaths were reported from dengue in 24 hours till yesterday morning, raising the number of fatalities from the mosquito-borne disease in Bangladesh to 13 this year.

During the period, 18 more patients were hospitalised with the viral fever, according to the Directorate General of Health Services.

A total of 821 dengue cases have been reported since January 1.

Last year, a total of 1,705 people lost their lives due to dengue, making it the deadliest year on record. The DGHS recorded 321,179 dengue cases and 3,18,749 recoveries last year.

PRAYER
TIMING
JANUARY 21

Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha
AZAN 5-30 12-45 4-15 5-43 7-15
JAMAAT 6-05 1-15 4-30 5-47 7-45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION