

**পূবালী ব্যাংক থেকে রেমিট্যান্স গ্রহণ
স্বাস্থ্যেই দ্বিগুণ লাভ...**

যে কোনো শাখা থেকে পিন নম্বর এর মাধ্যমে রেমিট্যান্স গ্রহণ করলে সরকার নির্ধারিত ২.৫% প্রমোদনার সাথে পাবেন আরও ২.৫% পূবালী ব্যাংক প্রমোদনাসহ মোট ৫% প্রমোদনা।

সাপ্তে আনও আশ্রয় বিচ্ছিন্ন আক্রমণীয় পুত্রসমর



**পূবালী ব্যাংক পিএলসি
PUBALI BANK PLC.**

**ঘরে বসেই
ব্যাংক
অ্যাকাউন্ট
খুলুন**

পাই ব্যাংকিং (PI Banking) –
একটি পূবালী ব্যাংক অ্যাপস

পূবালী ব্যাংকে সক্ষয় করুন, নিরাপদে থাকুন

If metro speeds up Dhaka, footpath slows it down

MD ABBAS

For commuters like Prajukta Roy Chowdhury, a final-year student at a private university, metro rail has been a game changer.

The train now takes her to Motijheel from Mirpur-2 in 25 minutes. Excitement bubbled within her the first time she boarded a metro. The city seemed closer, more accessible than ever.

But her smile faltered after stepping off the train. What had been smooth sailing moments ago transformed into an obstacle course. Vendors spilled onto the footpaths, leaving a sliver of space for pedestrians to navigate.

She had to navigate through footpaths crowded with pushcarts loaded with various goods, from clothing to food items, as customers haggled with hawkers for their purchases.

What should have been a five-minute walk to her destination, which is just 700 metres away from the station, stretched into an agonising 15 minutes.

"During rush hours, you need to push through to move forward; it's embarrassing!" she said.

Echoing her, private bank employee Meer Rasel Ahmed added, "Recently, I travelled to a neighbouring country, and was amazed to see their long, spacious footpaths. But look at ours; we have to struggle to walk on the footpaths."

At least 50 other pedestrians this correspondent talked to expressed the same.

Visiting Motijheel recently, this correspondent saw the footpaths -- on both sides of the road stretching from Motijheel metro station to Gharowa Hotel -- were occupied by street vendors.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2



Makeshift tea stalls and shops crowd a footpath near Shapla Chattar in Motijheel, leaving little to no room for pedestrians. The photo was taken on Thursday.

PHOTO: STAR

EU wants to strengthen ties with Bangladesh

Says foreign ministry

BSS, Dhaka

The European Union has expressed their willingness to strengthen partnership with Bangladesh in the coming days.

European Commissioner for International Partnerships Jutta Urpilainen and European Commissioner for Crisis Management Janez Lenarcic expressed this during their meetings with Foreign Minister Hasan Mahmud in Brussels on Friday evening on the sidelines of 3rd EU Indo-Pacific Ministerial Forum, said a foreign ministry press release yesterday.

During the meeting, the two commissioners expressed interest in working together with Bangladesh on various issues through increasing EU cooperation and strengthening partnership, it added.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

Stories of hope and strength

Cancer survivors share experience at book launch

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Feverish childhood, cancer diagnosis at 18 and grueling chemo battles -- Aditi Falguni's story embodies the resilience of countless survivors.

"From early age, I used to battle frequent fevers and colds. At 18, I discovered that I was suffering from cancer," said Falguni.

"After enduring eight rounds of chemotherapy, I triumphed over the disease. However, I still face difficulty walking," she said.

Falguni shared her story of overcoming cancer at a book launching event and discussion session organised by The Centre for Cancer Care Foundation (CCCF) at Dhaka University's Lecture Theatre Auditorium yesterday.

The event saw the inauguration of "Ekthane Themo Na: Cancer Lorakuder Boyan," a book featuring 42 stories of cancer survivors.

Speaking at the programme, Abu Jamil Faisal, a public health specialist, highlighted the significance of such narratives.

"This book will embolden others facing cancer, fostering a collective strength. The stories' impact may pave the way for a cancer fund, offering crucial support to patients in need," he said.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2



Govt failed to save waterbodies

Speakers tell discussion on World Wetlands Day

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Government agencies responsible for protecting wetlands have failed in their duty, endangering the livelihoods of people as well as the biodiversity, discussants said at a programme yesterday.

The speakers, including environmentalists, rights activists, and teachers, demanded that the government officials concerned be held publicly accountable for their failure.

They also urged the government to take immediate action for protecting the wetlands and stop encroachment.

They made the demands while addressing a press conference marking World Wetlands Day, organised by Dhoritri Rokhaya Amra (DHORA), an environmental organisation, at Jatiya Press Club.

"The wetlands cannot be saved if a wrong person is in the respective position. Despite numerous laws protecting wetlands, corrupt

officials do not carry out their duties effectively," said Muzibur Rahman Howlader, former chairman of the National River Conservation Commission.

The wetlands cannot be saved if the wrong person is in the concerned position. Despite numerous laws protecting wetlands, corrupt officials do not carry out their duties effectively.

MUZIBUR RAHMAN HOWLADER
Former NRCC chief

"Bangladesh is one of the most wetland-rich countries, but its wetlands are in danger due to negligence," he said.

"As per rules, deputy commissioners must visit rivers and waterbodies every month and file reports on their condition, but this is not happening," he also said.

Muzibur further said during his NRCC tenure, at least 30,000 of the total 65,000 illegal establishments were demolished in six months, but three years later, barely any has been removed further.

"If irresponsible officials occupy positions, encroachment will only increase," he added.

Presenting the situation of encroachment on the Sonai river, Sharif Jamil, member secretary of DHORA, said projects worth crores of taka continue but rivers and other waterbodies are still facing danger.

Presiding over the event, Sharmeen Murshid, co-convenor of DHORA, said due to corruption, government agencies will keep ignoring the protection of rivers.

"We must unite to save our rivers," she added.

A tapestry of colours and cultures

Unique stall decors turn heads at Ekushey Boi Mela

ARAFAT RAHAMAN

Forget just books stacked on tables -- the Ekushey Boi Mela is also a vibrant spectacle for the eyes.

Visiting the fair, one can expect to get lost in a kaleidoscope of colours, designs. There are stories woven into every stall.

Stepping past the Suhrawardy Udyan gate, this correspondent was instantly drawn to a vibrant pavilion -- not just painted, but adorned with the iconic rickshaw art, an homage to Bangladesh's



The stall of Anya Prakash adorned with rickshaw art.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

newly recognised intangible cultural heritage.

This was the stall of Anya Prakash, a publishing house where creativity spills beyond the pages.

"We're always striving for unique pavilions," said Sirajul Kabir Chowdhury, its managing editor.

"This year, we picked the rickshaw art not just for its visual appeal, but also to reflect our commitment to creativity and cultural heritage."

There's more. Taking a stroll into the fair, a visitor will also come across Nabanna publication's "Machaang Ghar," a pavilion made of bamboo and thatch. The structure is reminiscent of Jum cultivator huts, complete with painted mountains and rivers.

"The book fair is a melting pot of cultures. So we decided to give a shout out to the hilly areas of our country. Our design allows us to showcase their heritage to all visitors," said its Director Ashik Aziz.

Each stall whispers a unique tale, transporting one to rural Bangladesh with Akash Prakashani's "Kure Ghar" design or amidst nature with Prokriti o Jibon's leaf and plant motifs.

Meanwhile, Mizan Publishers stands tall with a miniature Curzon Hall.

Jannatul Ferdous, a bookworm, said, "Those designs are really stunning. I was excited, like others, to have a photo with such beautiful stalls."

Even the little ones are not left out. Ghashforing's stall, adorned with green grass and characters from the popular "123 Sisimpur" series, attracts countless young bookworms.

Anamul Akash, a fourth grader, said, "I'm so happy coming here. I saw them on TV, now seeing them here, is quite interesting."

Chetonay Oitijyo organised its stall with a boat symbol on top. Kobi Prokashoni, Quantum, and Bayanno stall also showcased uniqueness.

Couple burnt in 'gas explosion'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Narayanganj

A man and his wife were burned in an explosion "caused by accumulated gas" at a house in Rugganj upazila of Narayanganj yesterday morning.

The incident took place in a house in Kauarchar Noyapara area of Golakandail UP under the upazila, said Inspector Mostafizur Rahman, in-charge of Bhulta Police Outpost.

The injured -- Jahanara, 25, and her husband Shamim Mia, 29, -- are the tenants of the house. They are now undergoing treatment at the burn unit of Dhaka Medical College Hospital, the inspector said.

According to locals, they heard a loud explosion from the couple's home early in the morning.

They rescued the injured

SEE PAGE 4 COL 7



Numerous human hauliers occupy almost half of the city's Green Road. Meanwhile, posters and tangled web of overhead cables continue to remain an eyesore. The photo was taken near the Farmgate intersection yesterday.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN