



**B1**  
Regulator plans fresh audit into GP, Robi



**P7**  
Israeli airstrike kills Hezbollah commander



**P9**  
Justifying the unjustifiable genocide in Gaza



**P11**  
Computers say Arsenal won't win title

## EID JOURNEY

# Snarl-ups mostly at Dhaka exits

### Home rush to peak today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rifat Jahan was worried about her Eid journey home with her son and niece as her husband could not accompany them on the trip to Jamalpur's Sarishabari upazila.

Her husband bought the train tickets online and took them to Kamalapur Railway Station around 9:15am yesterday. Jamalpur Express was scheduled to leave at 10:00am.

"The train departed at 10:00am sharp. There was no delay, which we usually see ahead of Eid. We reached Sarishabari station on time," Rifat told this correspondent over the phone.

Like Rifat, many leaving Dhaka by train faced little to no hassle as most trains were on time as of noon. People leaving Dhaka on buses also had almost no difficulty until the evening.

But the situation changed for the worse in the evening as the surge of passengers at stations and terminals increased manifold, largely due to over a thousand garment factories and some offices closing for the holidays.

At bus stations, many had to pay scalpers extra to get tickets. Congestion and crawling traffic were reported in Savar, Baipail, and Chandra areas. These areas are key to people heading north.

The situation may deteriorate today as the number of passengers is expected to increase further, officials and bus operators said.

Eid will be celebrated across the country tomorrow (Wednesday) if the moon heralding the month of Shawal is sighted today (Tuesday) anywhere in Bangladesh. Otherwise, Eid will be celebrated on Thursday.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 2



**EID MUBARAK**  
The Daily Star wishes its readers, patrons, advertisers and well-wishers a very happy Eid

**HOLIDAY NOTICE**

The Daily Star offices will remain closed from April 9 to 14 on the occasion of Eid-ul-Fitr and Pahela Baishakh. There will be no newspaper for 6 days till April 15. We will serve our readers 24/7 through our website. Stay tuned to our web coverage in English and Bangla.

## 'Passengers' beat driver, conductor to death

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Savar

A driver and conductor of a bus were beaten to death allegedly by some passengers in Savar's Ashulia during an altercation over overcharging yesterday, police said.

Sohel Rana Babu, driver of Ithash Paribahan, and Hridoy, 30, conductor of the same bus were declared dead at Sheikh Fazilatunnessa Mujib Memorial KJ Specialised Hospital and Nursing College around 7:30pm, said Masudur Rhaman, inspector (investigation) at Ashulia Police Station.

Masudur said they were beaten up by passengers for overcharging near Dhaka Export Processing Zone on Nabinagar Chandra Road.

Delwar Hossain, chairman of Ithash Paribahan, said they were beaten to death but he was unsure whether the feud was over overcharging.

## BANGLADESHIS IN MALAYSIA Cops after workers, not rogue employers

### Malaysian Socialist Party alleges in letter to AG

PORIMOL PALMA

Malaysian police have been prosecuting Bangladesh migrant workers instead of the employers who have confiscated the workers' passports and failed to provide them with jobs and salaries, alleged the Malaysian Socialist Party (PSM).

In a letter to Malaysian Attorney General (AG) Datuk Ahmed Terrirudin bin Mohd Salleh on April 3, PSM's Deputy Chairman S Arutchelvan wrote that despite complaints to the police and the Human Resources Department, filed by the migrants and the PSM, no action has been taken against the employers.

"Instead, police are now investigating fake complaints made by the employers against the workers," the letter read.

Meanwhile, an employing company Beaks Construction and its subsidiary Suria Harmoni filed a defamation case against the PSM and a Malaysian online news portal Malaysiakini on April 5, claiming that the allegations against them were untrue, said PSM Labour Bureau Head Sivaranjani Manickam.

"We will continue to fight legally," she told The Daily Star yesterday.

According to the letter to the AG, six Bangladeshi workers filed a complaint to the police on March 12, alleging that Beaks Construction Sdn Bhd has not only confiscated their passports but has not provided them with jobs or salaries as promised.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 2

## City Bank likely to take over BASIC Bank

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Troubled state-owned BASIC Bank is likely to be acquired by private sector lender City Bank as the central bank is forging full steam ahead with its plan to engineer the takeover of weak banks with stronger ones.

The development comes after the Bangladesh Bank in a meeting yesterday with the top brass of City Bank directed the private bank to make preparations to acquire a weak bank, The Daily Star has learnt from central bank officials informed with the proceedings.

Once a well-run state bank, BASIC descended into a hotbed of irregularities after Sheikh Abdul Hye Bacchu was made its chairman in 2009 on political considerations.

A central bank investigation in 2014 found Bacchu's involvement in embezzlement of Tk 4,500 crore from the bank. This ultimately diminished the bank's financial health from which it is yet to recover.

Its losses between 2012 and 2022 totalled Tk 4,230 crore. It gave loans amounting to Tk 13,459 crore - 57 percent of which has turned bad.

City, on the other hand, is one of the leading private banks. In 2023, it logged in profit of Tk

638 crore, up 33 percent year on year. Its total loan portfolio stands at Tk 39,607 crore, 3 percent of which has turned bad.

City Bank Managing Director Mashrur Arefin acknowledged that the issue of taking over a weak bank was discussed at the meeting, which was presided over by BB Governor Abdur Rouf Talukder and attended by City Bank Chairman Aziz Al Kaiser.

"If a strong bank acquires a weak bank willingly, then the government will give policy support. So, we are analysing whether we can acquire a weak bank."

He, however, did not name any prospective bank for takeover.

"Primarily, we will restructure the weak bank for three years and then merge it with the City Bank. If all processes go in the right direction, the central bank may allow some more years to merge," Arefin added.

Abu Md Mofazzal, managing director in charge of BASIC Bank, is unaware of any probable acquisition by City.

"We have come to know from news reports today," he told The Daily Star yesterday.

Mofazzal is yet to be informed by the finance ministry or the central bank on the plan.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

## 2 more 'KNF members' held

### It drive intensifies in Bandarban

STAR REPORT

The joint operation against the Kuki-Chin National Front (KNF) intensified in Bandarban yesterday, a day after the army chief General SM Shafiqul Islam visited the hill district, police said.

At least seven people, including three alleged members of KNF, have so far been arrested and seven firearms and some KNF uniforms recovered in different raids over the last three days, according to official sources.

The situation in Ruma, Thanchi and Rawangchari remains tense in the wake of last week's armed robbery in two banks in Thanchi and the kidnap of a bank manager in Ruma - all within 16 hours.

The gunmen allegedly looted at least Tk 17 lakh from Sonali Bank and Krishi Bank, within 10 feet apart, in broad daylight on Wednesday in Thanchi Bazar. Earlier on Tuesday night, armed men kidnapped the branch manager of Sonali Bank in Ruma after failing to break open the bank's vault.

None of the three branches resumed operations, and people are having to go

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

## BUSINESS

### 50 percent factories yet to pay salary of March

Half of the mills and factories in Bangladesh were yet to clear the salaries of their employees for March even a day before the beginning of the government-announced holidays for Eid-ul-Fitr, according to Industrial Police.

As of yesterday, 51.21 percent, or 4,849 out of 9,469 mills and factories, did not pay the salaries of March, data shows.

The factories and mills are located in industrial zones in Ashulia, Savar, Gazipur, Narayanganj, Cumilla, Chattogram, Khulna, Sylhet and Narsingdi.

STORY ON B1



People through the Sadarghat launch terminal to travel to the southern districts for the Eid and Pahela Baishakh holidays yesterday. Many launches had no floor space unoccupied while some people were seen travelling on the roof of the vessels.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

## AL MP's men storm police station, beat up party activists

### Lawmaker was present during the attack, says sorry

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bogura

Bogura 6 MP Ragebul Ahsan Ripu stormed into Bogura Sadar police station with his men on Sunday night and beat up Jubo League and Chhatra League men, according to eyewitnesses.

It all started around 10:00pm on Sunday when a motorcycle hit Rakibul Islam Ranju, president of Bogura Shajahanpur Upazila Chhatra League, in the leg in front of Bogura Zilla School.

Ranju told off the driver for reckless driving. "The boy apologised and left. Later I came to know that he is the son of the UP chairman of Shibganj upazila," Ranju told The Daily Star.

Moments later, the motorcycle driver came back to the scene with 15-20 youths led by Protit Ahsan, the 18-year-old son of Ripu.

"They surrounded me with sticks and iron rods and started to beat me up," Ranju told The Daily Star.

The patrolling police and Jubo League leaders broke the melee and the police took both parties to the sadar outpost to settle the matter.

"Shortly after that, Ripu entered the police station with about 20-30 local goons. Without hearing anything, they started beating us in front of the police. After that, Ripu



Ragebul Ahsan Ripu

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1