

RAILWAY EASTERN ZONE

# Staff shortage forces 54 station closures

SIFAYET ULLAH, Ctg

Abu Taleb, 48, a schoolteacher from Chattogram's Hathazari upazila, used to commute to and from his workplace in the port city by train. However, for the past five years, he has been compelled to travel by bus after the rail station near his residence was closed down.

He said train journeys are safer and cheaper than buses, but the closure of Sarkar Hat rail station left him with no other option.

Sarkar Hat station on the Chattogram-Nazirhat rail section was shut down in 2020 due to a manpower shortage. Previously, two passenger trains used to run regularly on this route.

Like Sarkar Hat, at least 54 out of 243 stations in railway's Eastern Zone have been closed over the past two decades due to a shortage of staff, mainly station masters and pointsmen, according to official data.

The sanctioned workforce for the Eastern Zone is 22,358, but only 11,522 staff members are currently employed.

Tofayel Ahmed, who regularly commutes on the Chandpur-Chattogram route for business, said he has been facing delays and increased expenses since the Chitosh Road station near his residence

was shut down in 2021, forcing him to travel to a more distant station to board the train.

Nizam Uddin, a resident of Patiya upazila, has also been experiencing difficulties since the closure of Dhalghat station in 2022.

The closure of these stations has not only caused hardship for commuters but has also led to delays in train journeys.



According to station masters and loco masters, the normal train speed on the Laksam-Chandpur section is 65 kilometres per hour. However, trains have to slow down to 16 kilometres per hour when passing through closed stations due to safety precautions.

Jamal Uddin, a loco master, said operational stations have a system to

SEE PAGE 4 COL 8



**HERALDING SPRING.** The vibrant blossoms of the Palash tree, nestled beside the playground at Barishal University, spread their enchanting beauty along the roadside. Their golden petals sway in the gentle breeze, turning the ordinary path into a picturesque haven of charm and grace. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: TITU DAS

## BDR CARNAGE

Families seek justice, oppose 'early release' of convicts

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Families of army officers killed in the 2009 Pilkhana massacre yesterday demanded that those sentenced to life imprisonment or death in connection with the killings must not be released "prematurely" in the name of justice.

At a press conference held around 11:00am at the RAOA Club in Mohakhali, they reiterated their call for February 25 to be declared "National Shaheed Sena Day".

The families launched a charitable organisation, "Shaheed Sena Officers' Association," at the press conference, aiming to preserve the legacy of the fallen officers and ensure justice for their deaths.

Nehreen Ferdousi, wife of deceased Colonel Mojibul Hoque, said, "February is a month of immense grief for us. We count the days, waiting for it to end."

On February 1, a delegation of the families met with the army chief at Army Headquarters. They were assured that the army would formally urge the government to declare February 25 as National Shaheed Sena Day.

They also demanded a proper investigation into the unnatural deaths of several BDR personnel in prison, claiming that the masterminds behind the Pilkhana massacre are still at large.

# LOST SIGNALS, LOST SAFETY

Poor radio transmission puts fishers at risk in deep sea



SUSHANTA GHOSH, Barishal

Siddique Majhi, a 55-year-old fisherman from Kuakata, has spent three decades fishing in the deep sea but has never been able to tune into Bangladesh Betar's Barishal station.

He said they sometimes manage to access broadcasts from Dhaka and Chattogram stations, but these often get disconnected.

Like him, thousands of deep-sea fishermen in the Barishal division remain vulnerable to disasters due to the weak radio frequency of Bangladesh Betar's Barishal station.

During emergencies, these fishermen fail to receive crucial weather updates, increasing the risk of accidents at sea.

Most fishermen lack dedicated radios and rely on mobile phones to listen to broadcasts.

However, mobile connectivity is lost about three hours after departure, around 50 to 60 kilometres from the shore, leaving them completely cut

off from weather updates, said Hasan Majhi, a fisherman from Bholo Sadar.

Bholo's fishermen often travel as far as Chattogram and Sandwip, where they are beyond the reach of mobile networks and miss crucial storm warnings.

Mohammad Azharul Islam,



project director of the Sustainable Coastal and Marine Fisheries Project, said the government installed GSM technology in 10,000 fishing boats nationwide in 2019, including 6,000 boats in six districts of Barishal division.

"However, most of these systems are no longer operational, leaving fishermen exposed to the dangers of the sea," he added.

The Barishal divisional fisheries office reports that

the country's coastal region, spanning 14 districts across Barishal, Chattogram, and Khulna divisions, has 29,671 deep sea fishing boats.

Among them, Barishal alone has 12,259 boats. With each boat carrying around ten crew members on average,

the value of these shares stands at Tk 5,109,67,96,260.

Judge Md Zakir Hossain of the Metropolitan Senior Special Judge's Court in Dhaka passed the order after an ACC official submitted an application in this regard.

In the application, he said they found 437.85 crore shares of 42 companies owned by S Alam and his family members while investigating the allegations brought against them.

"S Alam and family members were trying to transfer those shares worth Tk 5,109,67,96,260 elsewhere. If they do so, inquiry into the allegations brought against them might be hampered. So, an order is needed to prevent them from transferring those shares," he said.

"Fish are becoming harder to find, forcing boats to venture farther into the deep sea – sometimes up to 150 kilometres from the shore – thus increasing our exposure to rough weather," said Kuakata fisherman Nuru Majhi.

Israel Pandit, president of Barishal Bibhagiyo Khudra

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2

Freeze 437.85 crore shares of S Alam's chairman

Court orders ACC

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday ordered Anti-Corruption Commission to freeze 437.85 crore shares of 42 companies belonging to S Alam Group Chairman Mohammad Saiful Alam and his family in connection with allegations of laundering US \$1 billion to Singapore and several other countries.

The value of these shares stands at Tk 5,109,67,96,260.

Judge Md Zakir Hossain of the Metropolitan Senior Special Judge's Court in Dhaka passed the order after an ACC official submitted an application in this regard.

In the application, he said they found 437.85 crore shares of 42 companies owned by S Alam and his family members while investigating the allegations brought against them.

"S Alam and family members were trying to transfer those shares worth Tk 5,109,67,96,260 elsewhere. If they do so, inquiry into the allegations brought against them might be hampered. So, an order is needed to prevent them from transferring those shares," he said.

**SWAPNAPURI PARK**  
Another 48 animals rescued



OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

The Wildlife Crime Control Unit of the Forest Department, Dhaka on Tuesday rescued 48 more illegally confined wild animals in the second phase of drive at Swapnapuri Park in Nawabganj upazila of Dinajpur.

They also shut down the mini zoo there.

The recovered animals include five bears, five barking deer, 11 monkeys, 17 sambar deer, five great hornbills, two porcupines, and one otter.

On January 26, the authorities rescued 74 wild animals from the park.

**Elephant found dead in Cox's Bazar**



STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

Officials of the Forest Department recovered a dead elephant in Cox's Bazar's Chakaria upazila yesterday.

The carcass was found around 7:00am in a tobacco plantation near the hills in Ghunia area of Fasiakhali union. Locals said the elephant died from electrocution due to electric trap set up to protect the tobacco fields.

Asked, Mehrab Uddin, range officer of Fasiakhali Range, said the cause of the elephant's death would be confirmed after an autopsy. The male elephant was aged between 40 and 42 years.

Government of The People's Republic of Bangladesh Office of the Project Director Establishment of 100 Technical School and College(TSC) In Upazilla (2 <sup>nd</sup> Revised) Directorate of Technical Education Agargaon, Dhaka 1207. Web: www.techedu.gov.bd				
Memo No: 57.03.0000.070.007.203.025-67 Date: 12 Feb, 2025				
<b>e-GP Tender Notice</b>				
e-Tender is invited in the national e-GP system portal ( <a href="http://www.eprocure.gov.bd">http://www.eprocure.gov.bd</a> ) for the procurement of goods details bellows in the table.				

Sl. No.	Tender Ref.	Tender ID No. (From e-GP Portal)	Tender Description	Publication Date and Time	Opening Date and Time
01.	57.03.0000.070.007.203.25-37	1013494	Farm-1, Supply & Installation of Equipment for Farm Machinery Lab For 13 TSC	13-Feb-2025 09:00:00	17-Mar-2025 12:00:00
02.	57.03.0000.070.007.203.25-40	1071746	Fish-1, Supply & Installation of Equipment for Fish Culture & Breeding Lab For 7 TSC	13-Feb-2025 09:00:00	17-Mar-2025 12:00:00
03.	57.03.0000.070.007.203.25-39	1071748	Poultry-1, Supply & installation of Equipment for Poultry rearing & Farming Lab For 5 TSC	13-Feb-2025 09:00:00	17-Mar-2025 12:00:00
04.	57.03.0000.070.007.203.25-33	1071838	IT-3, Supply & installation of Equipment for IT & IOT Lab For 11 TSC	13-Feb-2025 09:00:00	17-Mar-2025 12:00:00

This is an online Tender, where only e-Tenders will be accepted in the National e-GP portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted.  
To submit e-Tender, registration in the national e-GP system portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required  
The fees for downloading the e-GP tender documents from the national e-GP system portal have to be deposited online through any registered bank's branches up to specified date & time mentioned in the e-GP system.  
Further information and guidelines are available in the national e-GP system portal and from e-GP helpdesk ([helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd](mailto:helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd)).  
The Procuring Entity reserves the right to accept or reject any or all tenders.

Dr. Abu Kashem Mohammad Jahangir Hossain  
Project Director (Deputy Secretary)  
Email: 100ts.pd@gmail.com

**JAMUNA BRIDGE**  
BR conducts test runs for train

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

Bangladesh Railway yesterday started operating passengers train through the newly built Jamuna Railway Bridge on trial basis, a month before its formal inauguration.

A Dhaka-bound Silk City Express from Rajshahi crossed the bridge between 11:20am and 11:30am before reaching the east bank, said Md Moniruzzaman, station master of Jamuna Bridge West Rail Station.

With this, train operation on the old rail tracks of Jamuna Multipurpose Bridge has been suspended, he said.

The longest

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5



**বাংলাদেশ কৃষি গবেষণা ইনসিটিউট**  
Bangladesh Agricultural Research Institute

কৃষি সমূহ  
Email: dd.procure@bari.gov.bd  
Younusali.bari@gmail.com  
Phone : 03350,49270140

Memo No: 12.21.0000.007.01.198.24.3205

**e-GP: Tender Notice No. 26 (2024-2025)**

e-Tender is invited in the e-GP system Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the procurement of the following goods. Details are given below :

Sl. No.	Package No.	Tender ID & Ref No	Description of goods	Tender Documents Last selling (Date & Time)	Tender Closing date & Time	Tender Opening date & Time
02.	PN-GD-05	1073068 & IRN : 198	Laboratory Equipment 13 (Thirteen) Items.	23.02.2025 11:15	23.02.2025 12:00	23.02.2025 12:00

The interested persons/firm may visit the website [www.eprocure.gov.bd](http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) to get the details of the tender.

This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the national e-GP portal and no offline/hard copy will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, Registration in the National e-GP system portal is required.

Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP system portal and e-GP Help Desk ([helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd](mailto:helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd)).

**Budget Type:** Program on Agricultural and Rural Transformation for Nutrition Entrepreneurship and Resilience in Bangladesh (BARI Component).

GD-406

22/2/2025  
(Md. Younus Ali)  
(BARI-0663)  
Deputy Director (In-Charge)  
On behalf of Director General