BRTC to launch special Durga Puja bus service from Oct 20

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

For the first time, Bangladesh Road Transport Corporation (BRTC) will launch a special bus service for Durga Puja from October 20 to 24 to ensure safe and smooth journeys during the festival.

The service is being introduced under instructions from the Road Transport and Highways Division, according to a press release signed by BRTC Public Relations Officer Mostakim Bhuiyan, issued yesterday.

Advance ticket sales and reservations will begin today at 22 BRTC bus depots nationwide.



BRTC has kept 200 buses ready for intra-district and inter-district services on routes from Dhaka and Gazipur to Rangpur, Bogura, Gaibandha, Dinajpur, Pabna, Thakurgaon, Lalmonirhat, Kurigram, Rajshahi, Naogaon, Panchagarh, Bhurungamari, Madaripur, Gopalganj, Kushtia, Barishal, Khulna, Tangail, Sirajganj, Mymensingh, Netrokona, Kishoreganj, Jamalpur, Sylhet, Sunamganj and Chattogram.

The number of buses will be increased depending on passenger demand, the release added.

BRTC will also keep 60 buses on standby at Motijheel Bus Depot, Fulbaria CBS-2, Sayedabad Bus Terminal, Gazipur Chowrasta, Chandra intersection, and Mohakhali Bus Terminal.



Once a fast-flowing waterway, the Belai river in Bagerhat's Rampal has become heavily silted up, losing much of its navigability. The accumulation of silt has reduced its depth and obstructed the natural flow of water, threatening aquatic biodiversity and local livelihoods while increasing the risk of waterlogging in surrounding areas. The photo was taken recently. PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

45th BCS gazette leaves dozens of recommendees in limbo

Many suspect political affiliations behind exclusion; ministry says procedures were followed

BAHARAM KHAN *and* MAHATHIR MOHAMMED

Nearly 11 months after the 45th Bangladesh Civil Service (BCS) recommendations were published, at least 56 candidates have been left out of the appointment gazette without knowing why.

The Public Service Commission (PSC) recommended 1,807 candidates in November last year, but the appointment gazette issued by the Ministry of Public Administration on Wednesday included 1,702 names, leaving out 105 previously recommended candidates.

According to candidates who maintain communication among themselves, the PSC cancelled one recommendation, while 48 candidates did not appear for medical examinations, leaving the other 56 confused about the exclusion.

> **During the July movement, I put my political identity aside and took to the streets. Why have I been excluded now because of that political identity?**
>
> **SAZZAD HOSSAIN,** an excluded candidate

While the gazette did not explain the exclusions, many of the excluded candidates said they knew of no reason for being left out, such as criminal cases against them.

The Daily Star could not obtain a specific explanation from the Ministry of Public Administration, but an official said the gazette was published following established procedures.

Around 30 excluded candidates held a rally at the Raju Memorial Sculpture on Dhaka University campus yesterday, demanding that the government resolve their cases and include them in the gazette by 10:00am on Saturday.

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IN BRIEF

4 die with measles-like symptoms

UNB, *Dhaka*

Four more patients died with measles-like symptoms in the 24 hours until 8:00am yesterday, bringing the country's combined tally of confirmed and suspected measles-related deaths to 1,181 this year.

The Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) classified all four latest fatalities as suspected measles deaths.

With these deaths, the total number of suspected measles deaths has reached 1,077, while confirmed deaths from measles remain unchanged at 104.

A total of 1,306 new suspected measles cases were reported during the 24 hours, bringing the cumulative nationwide total to 2,09,876.

Meanwhile, 86 new confirmed measles cases were recorded, taking the total number of laboratory-confirmed infections to 22,926.

Since March 15 this year, a total of 1,86,583 patients with suspected measles have been hospitalised across the country. Of them, 1,78,869 have recovered, according to the DGHS.

Ten more die of dengue, 1,943 get hospitalised

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least 10 dengue patients died, and 1,943 others were hospitalised in the 24 hours till 8:00am yesterday, marking the highest daily death toll again this year, according to the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS).

Of the deaths, four were reported in Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC), three in Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC), two in Chattogram division, and one in Dhaka division.



With the latest deaths and cases, the death toll rose to 331 and the total number of cases to 1,07,259 this year.

Currently, 5,897 dengue patients are receiving treatment at hospitals nationwide.

The country also recorded 10 dengue deaths in a single day on October 6.



Border Guard Bangladesh personnel stand guard in riot gear at the entrance to Ramna Kali Mandir in the capital as visitors walk past yesterday. BGB personnel have been deployed at major temples and puja mandaps across Dhaka to maintain security ahead of Durga Puja. PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

34 cases of idol vandalism, temple attacks

Reports Puja Udjapan Parishad

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Puja Udjapan Parishad has reported 34 incidents of idol vandalism, attacks on temples and related violence ahead of Durga Puja, saying arrests have been made in 11 of the cases.

The Daily Star could not independently verify the claims.

"Security cannot be a concern for only the five days of Puja. We must ensure security for all 365 days of the year," said Santosh Sharma, general secretary of the Parishad, at a press conference at Dhakeshwari National Temple in Dhaka yesterday.

The incidents were reported in several districts, including Sylhet, Rajbari, Panchagarh, Netrokona and Tangail. The Parishad also reported attacks and looting targeting Hindu homes, shops and temples in Sunamganj.

A total of 33,851 pujas will be held across Bangladesh this year, including 258 in Dhaka city, down from 261 last year, the Parishad said.

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Jamaat alleges bribery, bias in fertiliser dealer appointments

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami yesterday alleged partisanship, nepotism and bribery in the appointment of fertiliser dealers, questioning why farmers were facing shortages despite government estimates showing surplus stocks.

"Chaos and partisanship in the appointment of fertiliser dealers and in the fertiliser crisis are going beyond all limits," Jamaat Secretary General Mia Golam Porwar told a press conference at the party's central office in Dhaka's Moghbazar.

He alleged that many members of upazila and district fertiliser and seed monitoring committees had been nominated on political considerations.

Porwar alleged that existing policies governing fertiliser imports, distribution and dealer appointments were being violated.

Under the policy, no family can hold more than one dealership, while applicants must be residents of the relevant union and have their own godowns and sufficient financial capacity.

He further alleged that ruling party MPs and leaders had divided dealership appointments among themselves and were awarding them in exchange for money.

Citing Agriculture Minister Mohammed Aminur Rashid, he said fertiliser demand for the 2026-27 fiscal year stood at 58 lakh tonnes, while government estimates showed stocks exceeding demand by about nine lakh tonnes. "If there is enough fertiliser against demand, why is there a shortage? Then this is a hundred percent failure of the government in distribution," he said.

Jamaat demanded an immediate investigation into the allegations and punishment for those found guilty.

