

# IDA urges Dhaka Urban Transport Project to move

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SOHEL ISLAM

The supervision mission of the International Development Agency (IDA) in its aide memoir on July 21 said if the Dhaka Urban Transport Project (DUTP) is not completed within the stipulated time, the surplus credit will be withdrawn.

The total cost of DUTP is now US \$118 million, of which IDA's share is around US\$93 million. The rest of the project cost worth US\$25 million is being borne by the government.

The aide memoire noted that only 48 per cent works of the DUTP have so far been implemented since June 16 1999. Since last November only 18 per cent progress has been made on the same project.

As the DUTP enters the final year, the IDA mission suggested that a 50-percent increase is needed in the current rate of implementation progress to complete the project works. The concluding period of the project is June 30 2004.

The works of the DUTP comprise the construction of Mohakhali Fly over and Tongi bypass, improvement of roads, traffic signals of various important sections, three bus terminals of the city, introduction of more Non Motorised Transport (NMT)-free roads to the existing ones, procurement of equipment for the DMP and Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA), the Road and Highways Department (RHD) and others.

The IDA mission expressed its concern over the construction

work of Mohakhali flyover and said it may not be completed within the stipulated time.

The aide memoire, however, emphasised the need for addressing the growing challenges facing the transport system in Dhaka.

The IDA mission urges the government to implement the Road and Traffic Maintenance Fund for the Dhaka City Corporation (DCC), to reorganise the DCC road function, to strengthen traffic enforcement along arterial corridors by the Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP), to implement the parking policy and a pilot bus-route franchise, to initiate the strategic transport plan, and to improve the effectiveness of the Dhaka Transport Co-ordination Board.



The works of the DUTP include the construction of the Mohakhali fly over, Tongi bypass, and improvement of roads.

## AC bus services heating up

Dhaka has five AC bus routes, charging the highest fares to provide cooling systems, but the services' increasingly hot and bothered commuters are feeling quite cheated

BISHAWJIT DAS

The city's air-conditioned (AC) bus services are not providing proper cooling rides for its passengers. Dhaka city has five AC bus routes, charging the highest fares to provide cooling systems, but commuters are feeling quite cheated.

Uttara-Motijheel, Savar-Motijheel, and

EPZ-Motijheel are the routes within the city, and there are two other inter-district AC bus services on Narshindi-Gulistan, Narayanganj-Gulistan routes.

'Premium' provides two routes in the city, one is at Uttara and the other is at Savar. Nirapad only runs on the Uttara route.

It is alleged that most of the AC buses at the Savar route do not have adequate

cooling systems. "Getting a cool bus on a hot, humid day is quite rare on this route. Possibly the company has given all the broken down buses on this route," said Emon, a commuter and student of Jahangirnagar University.

"Nirapad's buses do not have adequate AC. It is not only that they don't have good coolers, the drivers do not behave decently when they are asked to

turn them on," said Imrul, a commuter from Uttara.

The AC services charge the highest bus fares for the cool services, and it is some 50 per cent to 100 per cent higher than other non air conditioned services. The fare from Uttara to Shahbagh is Tk 20 where the other non AC services take Tk 10 or Tk. 12, and the public buses take Tk. 9.

"That the fare is high is not a problem. The matter is we are being deceived," grumbled Banker Moinul, a commuter. "They should provide the cool air for the extra money."

"We follow the limited company rules for setting the fare. It is not the regular fare set by the government according to mileage," said the manager of Premium Bus Service. "This fare is authorised by BRTA."

The first city AC bus service started in 1997 with the Premium Bus Service of Nitel Motors. It served the Uttara dwellers immensely because there was no direct bus to Uttara at that time. Premium also initiated the practice of passengers forming orderly queues for the buses. Premium has 32 buses running at Uttara route and 25 at the Savar route. Nirapad Userix will reach its fourth year in this September. It has 20 buses running at Uttara route.

Answering the allegation that the buses do not have adequate air conditioning, Hannan replied, "The buses at the Savar route are a bit old, and we are fixing them. We can not stop the total service for those buses." In reply of the same inquiry, Mr. Forkan, manager of Nirapad Bus Service said, "Our buses are from different countries, so the parts are not always available. Besides we fix whenever there is any complaint."



'Nirapad' and 'Premium' are among the city's AC buses providing a less than cool service to its pas-

## Kindergarten code of conduct

CITY CORRESPONDENT

Kindergarten schools of the country are going to come under a code of conduct. The main objective of this initiative is to put a lid on the mushroom growth of such schools and make their operation more transparent and accountable.

With the dearth of quality government schools, kindergartens have become the only available option for parents of the city where they can send their children for 'proper' education. There are no reliable statistics available regarding the exact number of kindergartens in the country. According to a 1999 survey of the Bangladesh Bureau of Education, Information and Statistics, the number of schools is 2477, students 364196 and teachers 15052. But it is believed the actual figure of schools is much higher.

Md. Mofazzal Hossain, system manager of Bangladesh Bureau of Education, Information and Statistics says: "As the owners and teachers of such schools often do not cooperate, the exact figures are therefore very hard to obtain."

There is no control over the schools and the school authorities have no accountability. The owners of the schools establish and run the schools at their will taking advantage of the absence of a code of conduct. Many establish kindergartens for business purpose only and because of that the quality of education is not maintained. The high tuition fees and other expenses also make these schools reserved for children of the upper middle class and high-income groups.

In this backdrop, the ministry of education has taken a move to introduce the code of conduct. Earlier, the government had initiated formation of a similar code in 1994 that was never implemented.

The ministry of education has formed a 9-member body headed by Abdul Hannan, the chairman of National Curriculum and Textbook Board which will formulate the code of conduct.

"The body has already launched a study to evaluate the real picture of the schools, including calculating the number of schools, teachers and students,

justify the quality of schooling and teaching, whether the school authority is following the curriculum selected by the ministry of education. The study is expected to be concluded within the next three months, he added.

"The code will be finalised on the basis of the study report and after consultation with the concerned parties," said Education Minister Dr. Osman Faruque.

The Minister also informed that the priorities of the code would be firstly, to decide the authority under which the schools will function. It could be either the ministry of education or the bureau of primary education. Secondly, it will bring all the kindergarten schools inside a systematic form through registration.

Thirdly, there will be a system to monitor the course curriculum of the schools and whether it was conflicting with the national culture and spirit.

Also, the schools must follow a book list approved by the government.

"The objective to form the code of conduct is not to impose the government's control over the kindergarten schools. We want all the schools to come under a system that ensures the quality education," said Dr. Faruque.

According to the Minister, the code of conduct will not regulate the tuition fees and the salary of the teachers. But guardians want the government's intervention in this regard.

Rezaul Hassan, a guardian said that the fees were exorbitant and the school authorities don't have any sympathy for them.

"We are hostages of the school authority. There are some schools where the tuition fees for a play group student is more than Tk 2000. This is so irrational. The government should do something about this trend."

The schools meanwhile have welcomed the code of conduct.

"In every country there are code of conduct for all educational institutions, we should also have one," said Md Abdul Maleque, senior vice principal of Oxford International School.

## health, utility, cabs & train timing

### HEALTH

#### Hospitals

**Heart**  
National Institute of Cardio Vascular Diseases (NICVD),  
- 9130800, 9122560-59

#### Burn

Dhaka Medical College Hospital  
Burn Unit-8626812-6

#### Cancer

National Cancer Institute-8014914,  
8826561-65  
Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib  
Medical University-8612550-4,  
861455-9

#### Diabetes

Diabetic Research Hospital (BIRDEM)-  
9661551-5,  
8616641-50

#### Mother & Child Care

Shishu Hospital- 9119119,  
8116061-62  
Azimpur Mother & Child Health Training Institute- 8624827, 8624980

#### Eye

Islamia Eye Hospital-9110794,  
9119315  
National Eye Hospital- 8117202,  
8114807

#### Dental

Dental College -9002035

#### Orthopaedics

National Orthopaedics (Pangu) Hospital- 9114075, 9112150

#### General

Dhaka Medical College Hospital- 8626812-6  
Rushmono General Hospital- 8317819  
Holy Family Hospital- 8311731-25  
Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib  
Medical University Hospital- 8612550-4, 8614545-9  
Bangladesh Medical College & Hospital- 8115443, 9118202,  
Shamarita Hospital- 9131901  
Suhrawardy Hospital -- 9130800,  
9122560-69

#### Salimullah Medical College Hospital -- 7310061-4, 7319002-6

Cholera Research Hospital (ICDRB)- 8811751-60  
Monowra Hospital 8319802, 8318135

#### Blood Bank

Red Crescent Centre- 9116563  
Sandhani (DMCH)- 8624040  
Sandhani (SMCH)- 7310061,  
7310061,7319022  
Dhaka Medical College Hospital- 8626812-9

#### Eye Bank

Sandhani International Eye Bank- 8614040

#### Ambulances For Dead Body

Anzumam Mafidul Islam (Kakrail) 9336611, Gandaria 7319808,  
7318166,  
Al-Markajul Islam 9127867,

### UTILITY

#### Electricity

Electricity Complex- PDB- 9566601-5, 9560170-9  
Electricity Complex (DESA)- 8616737-43, 8617626  
DESCO- 8123138-40  
Complaints (Rural Electrification Board, Dhaka)- 8916424-8

#### Gas

Titas Gas Exchange (Emergency)- 9563667-8  
Kawrnazar-8112135-42  
Mirpur- 8014132-3  
Mohammadpur- 9117215,9113903  
Mohakhali- 9884741, 9885922,  
8824993  
Motijheel-9667612

#### WASA

WASA (PABX)- 8117829-31  
Mirpur- 9000519  
Mohammadpur- 8120192  
Fakirapool-9115343  
Asad Gate- 8917492  
Uttara- 9559142,  
Segunbagicha- 7316348  
Pagla- 8113900-39

#### Fire Services

Siddique Bazar (HQ)- 9556667  
Mohammadpur- 9112078  
Khilgaon- 7218329  
Mirpur- 9001055  
Tongi- 9801070  
Demra-7400111  
Postagola- 7410771  
Sadarghat- 7119759  
Mirpur 10 Circle- 9002269, 9001055  
Mirpur TVG Complex- 9001189

#### DO YOU KNOW

Fire services provide cheap, fast and efficient



### TAXI CAB

#### Yellow Cab

Navana 9558065  
Salida 9344477, 0171620881  
Cosmo 9112959 and 8127191  
Cab One 7113282-3  
Nihon 8624741-2  
Orion 9347277  
Anudip 8125285 and 8127611  
Capital 9352847

#### Union 8130485

Kool 0171826731

#### Black Cab

Cab Ex 9358401  
Cabline 8321162  
JBS Cab 019364575  
Sajan 018126036  
Anudip -- 8125285 and 8127611  
Cab One 7113282-3

#### Palki 0171052500

Cab I 7113282

Jatri 0171540074

Nipun 9572277

R-Cab 8914782

Star Cab 9571919

Shihab 018202477 & 018228675

KGN 8620011

### TRAIN TIMING

#### Subarna Express

Leaves Dhaka at 4:00 pm

Reaches Chittagong at 10:15 pm

#### Mahanagar Prabhati

Leaves Dhaka at 7:30 am

Reaches Chittagong at 2-55 pm

#### Mahanagar Godhuli

Leaves Dhaka at 3-05 pm

Reaches Chittagong at 9-11 pm

#### Turna

Leaves Dhaka at 11-00 pm

Reaches Chittagong at 7-05 am

#### Parabat Express

Leaves Dhaka at 6-30 am

Reaches Sylhet at 2-30 pm

#### Joyantika Express

Leaves Dhaka at 12-30 pm

Reaches Sylhet at 9-20 pm

#### Upaban Express

Leaves Dhaka at 9-30 pm

Reaches Sylhet at 6-40 am

#### Tista Express

Leaves Dhaka at 7-00 am

Reaches Bahadurabad at 1-05 pm

#### Ekata Express

Leaves Dhaka at 5-00 pm

Reaches Bahadurabad at 11-55

#### Upakul Express

Leaves Dhaka at 6-00 am

Reaches Noakhali at 1-35 pm

#### Padma Express

Leaves Dhaka at 9-20 pm

Reaches Jagannath at 2-30 pm