



New illegal rickshaws add to the chaotic traffic of Dhaka's already congested road network.

# Illegal rickshaws streaming in

ABDUL KADER

Illegal rickshaws have started flooding the city streets ahead of Eid, worsening the traffic congestion.

The badly affected areas are Mogbazar, Mouchak, Malibagh, Kakrail, Motijheel, Paltan, North South Road, Green Road, Science Laboratory Crossing, New Market, Jatrabari, Sayedabad and all major roads of the old Dhaka.

During Ramadan, an estimated 50 thousand new rickshaws are likely to hit the city streets, according to the rickshaw owners. The influx takes place when the authorities are struggling to drive out three lakh illegal rickshaws.

Sources said, a section of owners supplies duplicate numbers for unlicensed rickshaws on monthly payment under the banner of a rickshaw owners' organisation.

Hazer Ali, a puller who owns a rickshaw said, "I pay Tk 200 for using a genuine number. But there is a large number of owners who give duplicate numbers just for money," Ali said, citing this as the main reason for increase in illegal rickshaws.

Scores of new rickshaws are being manufactured in city areas like Jurine, Jatrabari, Maniknagar, Shahjahanpur,

Mugdapara, Modhubagh everyday, some owners said.

Besides, a few thousand more rickshaws would be added from Narayanganj, Tongi, Savar and other city peripheries till Eid, they said.

During the Eid period about 80 per cent of the new rickshaw-pullers will come from the northern districts of Rangpur, Dinajpur, Bogra, Gaibandha, Jamalpur and Nilphamari, they added.

"The total number illegal rickshaws may stand around three lakh though this figure will be lower compared to last year's because of the on-going drive against illegal rickshaws," said M Ali Akbar, general secretary of Dhaka City Rickshaw Malik Oikyojote.

An official at the Dhaka Traffic Coordination Board (DTCB) said around 2000 unauthorised rickshaws from the traffic division north and south have been seized till yesterday since the drive started on September 9. The seized rickshaws are being dumped at the Parade Square Ground, old airport, Tejgaon.

Two teams, each led by a traffic sergeant and some Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) officials of Wheel Taxation Department are spearheading the drive.

According to the Wheel Taxation Department of the

DCC there are only 80 thousand licensed rickshaws. But according to reliable sources, about three lakh rickshaws ply the city streets without valid papers.

A DCC official of the department blamed a certain organised gang for illegally copying the licences and number plates.

Meanwhile, the move to ban rickshaws on one of the six major roads this month has been put off for a month in view of Ramadan.

A DTCB official said, making off-limits to road stretching from Science Laboratory to Bangabazar via Elephant Road, Shahbagh and the National Press Club 'may tigger a bad impact'.

The decision will be implemented in December after the Eid celebration, he said.

Rickshaws will be banned on the Gabtali-Azimpur route via New Market in January, he said.

Rickshaw movement on the road between Gabtali and Russel Square was banned on December 20 last year.

The DTCB official said the road from Pragati Sarani to Rampura to Mouchak would be banned for rickshaws in March and the stretches from Bangla Motor, New Eskaton, Malibagh to Rampura and Rokeya Sarani to Farmgate in December next year.

# Pilferage adds fuel to DCC fuel cost

SOHEL ISLAM

The fuel expenditure of the transport pool of the Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) have gone up to over Tk one crore in the last decade due to suspected pilferage, increase in price and other irregularities.

In 1993, the DCC had spent around Tk 22 lakh for fuel while in 2003 it was nearly Tk 1.3 crore although the number of vehicles have by and large remained the same.

Mayor Sadeq Hossain Khoka on August 16 this year placed partial control of the transport pool under the conservancy department due to alleged pilferage by the drivers and other unscrupulous officials and employees.

The DCC's transport pool consists of two departments - central pool and conservancy pool. The central pool has 136 vehicles including cars, jeeps, microbuses and pickups while the conservancy pool has 371 vehicles including pay loaders, open trucks, container carriers, bulldozers and water tankers.

"Although control has been transferred, the pilferage at the transport department still goes on. The fuel consumption every month has remained the same as it was two months ago," a senior official of the DCC said.

"I cannot say the exact figure of money being spent on fuel now. But after the shift in control everything is improving," said chief conservancy officer of the DCC Sohel Faruqi.

"Tk 65 lakh was spent for fuel for the automobiles of the conservancy pool in October this year. The same amount of money was also spent in August," said Manager of Transport Department Millatul Islam.

A source at the DCC alleged that as there is no ceiling for fuel consumption in the conservancy pool, the drivers take more fuel than is needed.

"Had there been a bar, the theft would not have been so rampant. Despite around a hundred vehicles remaining out of order for nearly a year, the transport department is still issuing fuel for them every day.

"The pilferage at the central pool is much less than in the conservancy fleet. Each car gets nine litres while a jeep is entitled to have ten litres a day," the source informed.

Millatul Islam refuted the allegations of pilferage and irregularities.

"We don't issue fuel against out-of-order vehicles. What happens is that we have to use the running vehicles for waste disposal for more than their normal schedules. Therefore, we need to take the fuel, which would have been otherwise allotted for the out-of-order vehicles. This is where people misunderstand us," claimed Islam.

"Besides, over the last ten years, the price of diesel, patrol and octane has almost doubled. This is another reason behind the increase in fuel expenditure," added Islam.

# Dengue strikes again while DCC drowns

CITY CORRESPONDENT

Dengue has struck again in the absence of any long-term, concrete plan by Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) over the last two years to contain the spread of Aedes mosquitoes.

The DCC shut down the Aedes Mosquito Surveillance Control Project and Rapid Action Force (Raf) in 2001, allowing Aedes mosquitoes to breed.

Of the two plans, Raf, formed with 10 DCC zonal offices, proved effective in rolling back the dengue outbreak.

The DCC was then aware of the mosquito-breeding grounds thanks to 20 entomologists who had worked under the surveillance project.

Now, the number of dengue patients is increasing, but the DCC has not yet taken any measure to control the dengue outbreak.

A woman died of dengue haemorrhage at Dhaka Medical College Hospital on Sunday, and at least 18 dengue patients have been admitted to different city hospitals since Saturday.

"Dengue struck again as the authorities did not care much about the possible attack of Aedes mosquitoes," a DCC senior official said, requesting anonymity.

But DCC Chief Health Officer Azizul Haque said, "Whenever we get complaints of dengue, we rush to the places and spray larvicide and adulticide. We have marked Kalabagan, Kanthalbagan, Sukrabad, Dhanmondi and Mirpur as dengue-prone areas."

Dr Manzur Chowdhury, an entomologist, said the DCC undertook an awareness programme in July but discontinued it before the Aedes mosquito breeding time ended in October.

He hoped the dengue outbreak would slacken after winter arrives lowering temperature.

To fight Aedes mosquitoes, the DCC has only about 5,000 litres of larvicide and 50,000 litres of adulticide -- the amount the utility service provider called adequate.

"We are now thinking of reactivating Raf to fight Aedes mosquitoes as part of our zone-wise preventive measures," Haque said.

# Steps to clip mushrooming coaching centres

BISHAWJIT DAS

With admissions for schools and universities round the corner, thousands of students are rushing to coaching centres to prepare themselves to appear for these tests. But on the other hand the government is planning to take steps against the coaching centres that have been mushrooming over a period of time.

The ministry recently investigated into the copying habit and large numbers of failures in public examinations. Finding that coaching centres have become substitutes for schools and colleges, the government decided to take action to stop these centres and put these institutions under order.

The government will bar teachers from engaging themselves in the coaching and private tutoring business. Transfer of teachers who have completed eight years of service in city schools to villages and drawing up an academic calendar will be other measures taken. These will be implemented consecutively within a year, said sources in the education ministry.

Steps would be taken to ban the circulation and sale of notebooks of classes one to eight. The education ministry would frame a law on this matter and is presently drawing up a

draft, sources said.

It was also revealed that teachers do not take classes and exams regularly during the academic sessions. The insincerity shown by these teachers compel students to rush to houses of famed teachers for private tutoring and thus depend on tutoring and coaching centres.

The ministry is also investigating teachers engaged with coaching centres. Once identified, the ministry would issue letters prohibiting their involvement in coaching, and if continued they would be punished.

When the coaching centres are barred, the sale and publication of notebooks will stop, officials believe. Ministry would forbid sellers and publishers from selling or publishing notebooks. They would too, be punished if the order is not followed.

The ministry would also investigate the teachers who engage themselves in writing guides and notebooks in their pseudonyms. They would also be punished after identification.

On the contrary, a large number of coaching centres in the capital prepares thousands of students for school, college and university admissions, as well as public examinations.

"The necessity of coaching centres is essential in the present system and situation of education," said an

owner of a coaching centre.

"We are not in a position to prepare ourselves for the university admission since we have no idea about the admission systems of different universities," said Taposh, said a student at a coaching centre.

There are specialised coaching centres that cater to different sectors of university admission. "You cannot stop coaching centres even if laws are enforced against them. These have developed and rooted themselves so deeply in the society that no one can

deny their necessity," said owner of another coaching centre.

"If the total educational system can not be changed, the coaching centres will remain as it is, and the laws may only change the present form of coaching business".



Coaching centre banners in Green Road jams the skyline, advertising an increasingly profitable business.

# healthouting,taxicab&train

HEALTH	MARKET CLOSED	TAXI CAB	LIBRARY & INFO
<b>Hospitals</b> <b>Heart</b> National Institute of Cardio Vascular Diseases (NICVD), - 9130800, 9122560-59 <b>Burn</b> Dhaka Medical College Hospital Burn Unit-8626812-6 <b>Cancer</b> National Cancer Institute-8014914, 8826561-65 Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University-8612550-4, 861455-9 <b>Diabetes</b> Diabetic Research Hospital (BIRDEM)- 9661551-5, 8616641-50 <b>Mother &amp; Child Care</b> Shishu Hospital- 9119119, 8116061-62 Azimpur Mother & Child Health	<b>Training Institute-</b> 8624827, 8624980 <b>Eye</b> Islamia Eye Hospital-9110794, 9119315 National Eye Hospital- 8117202, 8114807 <b>Dental</b> Dental College -9002035 <b>Orthopaedics</b> National Orthopaedics (Pangu) Hospital- 9114075, 9112150 <b>General</b> Dhaka Medical College Hospital- 8626812-6 Rushmono General Hospital- 8317819 Holy Family Hospital- 83111731-25 Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University Hospital- 8612550-4, 8614545-9 Bangladesh Medical College & Hospital- 8115443, 9118202, <b>Shamarita Hospital-</b> 9131901 Suhrwardy Hospital -- 9130800, 9122560-69 Salimullah Medical Collage Hospital -- 7310061-4, 7319002-6 Cholera Research Hospital (ICDDR)- 8811751-60 Monowra Hospital 8319802, 8318135 <b>Blood Bank</b> Red Crescent Centre- 9116563 Sandhani (DMCH)- 8624040 Sandhani (SMCH)- 7310061, 7310061, 7319022 Dhaka Medical Collage Hospital- 8626812-9 <b>Eye Bank</b> Sandhani International Eye Bank- 8614040 <b>Ambulances For Dead Body</b> Anzuman Mafidul Islam (Kakrail 9336611, Gandaria 7319808, 7318166, Al-Markajul Islam 9127867,	<b>Yellow Cab</b> <i>Navana 9558065</i> <i>Salida 9344477, 0171620881</i> <i>Cosmo 9112959 and 8127191</i> <i>Cab One 7113282-3</i> <i>Nihon 8624741-2</i> <i>Orion 9347277</i> <i>Anudip 8125285 and 8127611</i> <i>Capital 9352847</i>  <b>Black Cab</b> <i>Cab Ex 9358401</i> <i>Calbine 8321162</i> <i>JBS Cab 019364575</i> <i>Sajan 018126036</i> <i>Anudip -- 8125285 and 8127611</i>  <b>Subarna Express</b> Mahanagar Prabhati Mahanagar Godhuli Turna Parabita Express Joyantika Express Upaban Express Tista Express Ekata Express Upul Express Padma Express  Leaves Dhaka at 4:00 pm Leaves Dhaka at 7-30 am Leaves Dhaka at 3-05 pm Leaves Dhaka at 11-00 pm Leaves Dhaka at 6-30 am Leaves Dhaka at 12-30 pm Leaves Dhaka at 9-30 pm Leaves Dhaka at 7-00 am Leaves Dhaka at 5-00 pm Leaves Dhaka at 6-00 pm Leaves Dhaka at 9-20 pm	<b>Cab One 7113282-3</b> <i>Palki 0171052500</i> <i>Cab l 7113282</i> <i>Jatri 0171540074</i> <i>Nipun 9572277</i> <i>R-Cab 8914782</i> <i>Star Cab 9571919</i> <i>Shihab 018202477 &amp; 018228675</i> <i>KGN 8620011</i>  Reaches Chittagong at 10:15 pm Reaches Chittagong at 2-55 pm Reaches Chittagong at 9-11 pm Reaches Chittagong at 7-05 am Reaches Sylhet at 2-30 pm Reaches Sylhet at 9-20 pm Reaches Sylhet at 6-40 am Reaches Bahadurabad at 1-05 pm Reaches Bahadurabad at 11-55 Reaches Noakhali at 1-35 pm Reaches Jagannath at 2-30 pm  <b>Libraries, Cultural and Information Centers</b>  Central Public Library- 8626001-4, Shishu Academy- 9564128 Shilpakala Academy- 8614673 Bangla Academy- 8619550 Islamic Foundation- 9550280, 9556407 Nazrul Institute- 9114602 Ford Foundation- 8116133 Alliance Francaise- 8611557 British Council- 8618867-8, 8618905-7 Community Development Library- 8113769, 8113604 Goethe Institute Int'l- Dhaka- 9126525-6 Indian Information Centre & Cultural Library- 8615096 The Russian Cultural Centre- 9116314, 9118531, 9118314 Drik Photo Gallery- 9120125, 8112954, 8123412