

BRTC move adds to the commuters' miseries

Leasing of buses to private operators on Motijheel-Tongi route has been withdrawn for reasons 'not convincing' to commuters

AVIK SANWAR RAHMAN

The Bangladesh Road Transport Corporation (BRTC) has withdrawn the leases awarded to private transport operators on the Motijheel-Tongi route which has increased the sufferings of the commuters.

Since the BRTC took over from the private enterprises reportedly because of not receiving expected revenue from them, shortage of buses and irregular timing has been a common feature.

The BRTC had introduced its sitting service with designated counters for tickets five years ago and leased out 38 buses along the Motijheel-Tongi route via Rampura to one company which was also operating on some other routes of the city.

But the company failed to pay any revenue for almost a year. The expected proceeds were Tk.38,000 per day. The lessee of the 38 buses was supposed to pay Tk.900 to 1,100 a day for each vehicle depending on their condition.

BRTC officials have now realised that leasing out to one particular company was not a feasible idea.

"It was not wise to depend on a single group to operate so many buses," admitted a high official of BRTC.

In an attempt to address the problem, BRTC withdrew that lease and gave a fresh one to a group of 11 individuals on the same route. But they too were unsuccessful in paying revenue and their service was also cancelled.

BRTC started the lease system to save the organisation from fuel-theft and operational costs. Apart from paying the fixed daily amount, the lessee had to bear the maintenance cost of the vehicles as well. But now all relevant expenditure has become solely BRTC's responsibility.

The Kamalapur depot of the BRTC was however confident of making profit.

"We should be able to earn Tk. 50,000 on the operation of buses on the Motijheel-Tongi route, whereas our maintenance and operational costs will be around Tk. 30,000," said a high official of the depot.

After the withdrawal of the lease, only seven buses were operating on the route via Rampura. The BRTC added 11 more buses from December 7. These were however, buses lying idle with mechanical problems but were fixed in a hurry to hit the road.



The queue of commuters for public transport is getting longer every day.

Court punishes as cheque bounces

CHAITANYA CHANDRA HALDER

A businessman has been sentenced to nine months imprisonment and fined Tk 32 lakh as a cheque issued by him was dishonoured.

The verdict was handed down by Mohammed Aiyub, Magistrate, Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's (CMM) Court last Sunday, in the absence of the accused Saidur Rahman Shahin. The verdict stated that Tk 30 lakh would be paid to the complainant and Tk 2 lakh would go to the treasury.

Satisfied with the verdict, the complainant said that it would have been better if the convict had been present in court when the verdict was read out.

On April 28, 1999, Akkasuddin Mollah, proprietor of Russel Garments Factory in Narayanganj filed a criminal case against Saidur Rahman with the CMM's court, after a cheque of Tk 29 lakh issued to him was dishonoured.

The complainant in his petition stated that Saidur and he had been in business and the accused took a loan amounting to Tk 29 lakh. Rahman in return gave him a cheque dated October 30, 1998.

When the cheque was submitted to the Sonali Bank, Kamalapur Branch, the cheque was returned as "refer to drawer". When the complainant informed the matter to the accused, another cheque was issued, to be once again dishonoured with the comment "stop payment". The complainant then sent a legal notice but was not satisfied with the reply from the accused.

Finding no alternative, the complainant filed charges against Saidur.

The accused in the first instance appeared in court, obtained bail and contested the case against him, but was absent on the date of the judgement and the verdict was pronounced in absentia.

Statements of six prosecution witnesses were recorded during the trial.

FOLLOW-UP

Buses once again occupy open space of colony

SOHEL ISLAM

Buses belonging to the ATCL company have once again returned to illegally occupy the entire open space of Asad Gate Colony for parking.

"The buses disappeared during the month of Ramadan. We thought that the authorities had taken steps to remove them. But they have come back again to turn the vacant spaces into a parking facility," said a resident requesting anonymity because of reported threats from the influential quarter that owns the buses.

About 40 ATCL buses are parked all over the open areas of the colony every day. At night, the place resembles any normal bus terminal of the city. This has been the scenario over the last two years.

"After dusk, this place becomes a hub of bus drivers, conductors and helpers. Their tasteless conduct, foul-mouth jibes etc. are embarrassing for those who live in the colony," said the resident.

"These people chat well into midnight as many of them sleep inside the buses. Their presence has had an adverse impact to the surroundings," he added.

The Daily Star had earlier reported about the illegal parking issue twice but the National Housing Authority (NHA) has not taken any action to evict the occupants.

On October 22, the office of NHA's Dhaka Division told The Daily Star that they would file a General Diary (GD) against the ATCL's owners. But so far nothing has happened.

Bachchu Mia, one of the partners of the ATCL company, totally denied that buses are parked around the buildings of the colony.

"I have every right to park the buses on plots owned by me inside the colony. Besides, an appeal is still pending with the High Court (HC) against the NHA over the ownership of the plots,"

said Bachchu when this correspondent approached him over phone.

In a rather controversial and secretive move, the NHA allotted Bachchu Mia and 11 others 1.4 bigha of land as part of the stranded Pakistani (Bihari) rehabilitation programme a few years ago. In a subsequent investigation, the NHA found out that none of those 11 were Biharis. The allocation was then cancelled.

Bachchu Mia filed a law suit against this cancellation in 2002.

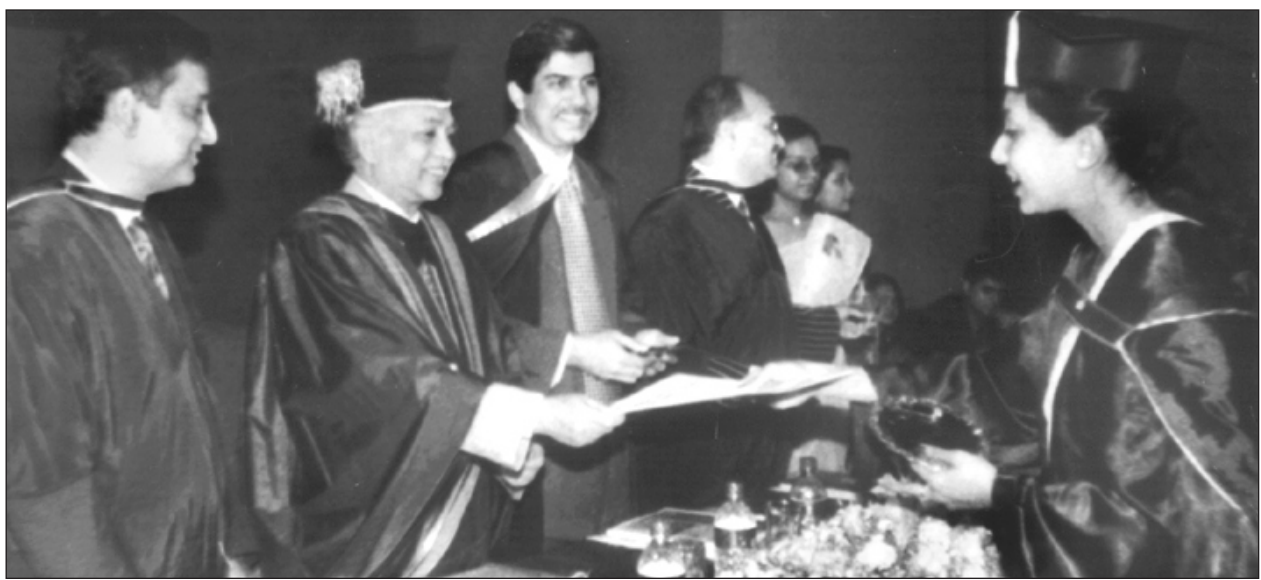
"Bachchu lost the case in the HC against us. His pending appeal does not give him the authority to park buses inside the colony," said Kabir Ahmed Bhuiyan, Executive Engineer of NHA Dhaka Division.

"We will file a GD soon as the ATCL has not paid attention to our request of moving away. As they have resumed parking without any legal ground, we will definitely take action against the owners," Bhuiyan added.



File photo of buses illegally parked inside Asad Gate Colony.

GRADUATION CEREMONEY



Dhaka University Vice-Chancellor S M A Faiz distributing certificates among the MBA and BBA graduates of the Institute of Business Administration (IBA) of the university at TSC auditorium on Friday. Fifty-five BBA and 114 MBA students graduated in the 7th and 35th batches.

healthouting, taxicab & train timing

HEALTH

- Hospitals**
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 (ICDDR)- 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**
Anzuman Mafidul Islam (Kakrail) 9336611, Gandaria 7319808, 7318166,
Al-Markajul Islam 9127867,

- MARKET CLOSED**
- Gulshan 1, 2 markets-Friday
Elephant Road-Friday
Bishal Center-Friday
Baitual Mukarram Market-Friday
Polwell Market-Friday
BCS Computer City-Friday
Isha Khan Shopping Complex-Friday.
Rajlaxmi Complex-Friday
Stadium Market-Friday
Bangabazar Market-Friday
National Museum-Thursdays
Ahsan Manzil--Thursdays.
New Market-Tuesday
Gausia Market-Tuesday
Mouchak Market-Sunday
Dhanmondi Hawkers Market-Tuesday
Dhanmondi Hawkers Market-Tuesday
Eastern Plaza-Sunday
Farmview Super Market-Sunday
Muktijuddha Jadughar-Sunday
Dhaka Zoo-Sunday
Shishu Jadughar-Sunday

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
- TRAIN TIMING**
- Subarna Express** Leaves Dhaka at 4:00 pm
Mahanagar Prabhathi Leaves Dhaka at 7:30 am
Mahanagar Godhuli Leaves Dhaka at 3:05 pm
Turna Leaves Dhaka at 11:00 pm
Parabat Express Leaves Dhaka at 6:30 am
Joyantika Express Leaves Dhaka at 12:30 pm
Upaban Express Leaves Dhaka at 9:30 pm
Tista Express Leaves Dhaka at 7:00 am
Ekata Express Leaves Dhaka at 5:00 pm
Upakul Express Leaves Dhaka at 6:00 am
Padma Express Leaves Dhaka at 9:20 pm

- Cab One 7113282-3**
Palki 0171052500
Cab I 7113282
Jatri 0171540074
Nipun 9572277
R-Cab 8914782
Star Cab 9571919
Shihab 018202477 & 018228675
KGN 8620011
- 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 pm
Reaches Noakhali at 1:35 pm
Reaches Jagannath at 2:30 pm

LIBRARY & INFO

- Libraries, Cultural and Information Centers**
- 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