

Road safety still far fetched

CITY CORRESPONDENT

Lack of traffic consciousness, education, campaigning, and training for professionals, effective traffic management policies and faulty road network designing has made the road safety fragile in Bangladesh.

The Human Rights Bureau's annual report revealed that at least 3,437 people were killed and 15,742 injured in 3,122 road accidents across the country in 2005.

In developed countries, three vehicles or less out of every 10,000 vehicles meet with accidents, while in Bangladesh more than 85 vehicles out of every 10,000 vehicles meet the same fate, according to the Road Safety Cell's data under the Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA).

According to the records of the Road Safety Cell of Bangladesh Road Transport Authority, in total, 21,288 accidents happened in last six years that killed some 17,825 people and injured more than 20,000.

Taking such serious data into consideration, an international conference is going to be held in Dhaka on August 22 aiming to bring together the leading international and local experts, academics and policy makers on a common platform to focus on the road safety issues in the developing countries.

Accident Research Centre, a government project for identifying the causes behind the accidents will organise this three-daylong

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conference at the campus of the Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology.

The organisers named reckless driving, over-speeding, overloading, ignorance of road users, vehicular defects, hazardous roads, inadequate training and poor enforcement of traffic rules as the main causes for road accidents.

Feroz Almozahid Khan, traffic deputy commissioner (south), Dhaka Metropolitan Police told Star City that Dhaka city with its dense population has only seven per cent road network that carries a huge pressure on the whole traffic system.

"In such circumstances, thousands of unfit vehicles with incompetent drivers are plying on the streets and contributing to the large number of accidents," he added.

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higher because the system to report and record the number of accidents and casualties is not adequate to indicate even a near reality.

"Media channels cannot cover all accidents and casualties, while the police also don't record them all," said Prof M Mazharul Hoque, director of ARC and head of the civil engineering department of Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET).

ARC estimates the officially recorded road mishaps alone eat away Tk 5,000 crore, or nearly two per cent of the GDP annually, while accident frequency and severity are on the rise.

Police records show that annually 4,000 people are killed and 5,000 injured in transport accidents, marking the fatality rate at least 50 times higher than the western countries, and the country needs well-integrated

programmes and creating mass awareness on road safety, said Mazhar.

The ARC has been monitoring and analysing traffic accidents since end-2001. It is now implementing a comprehensive research on number and causes of road accidents and remedial measures.

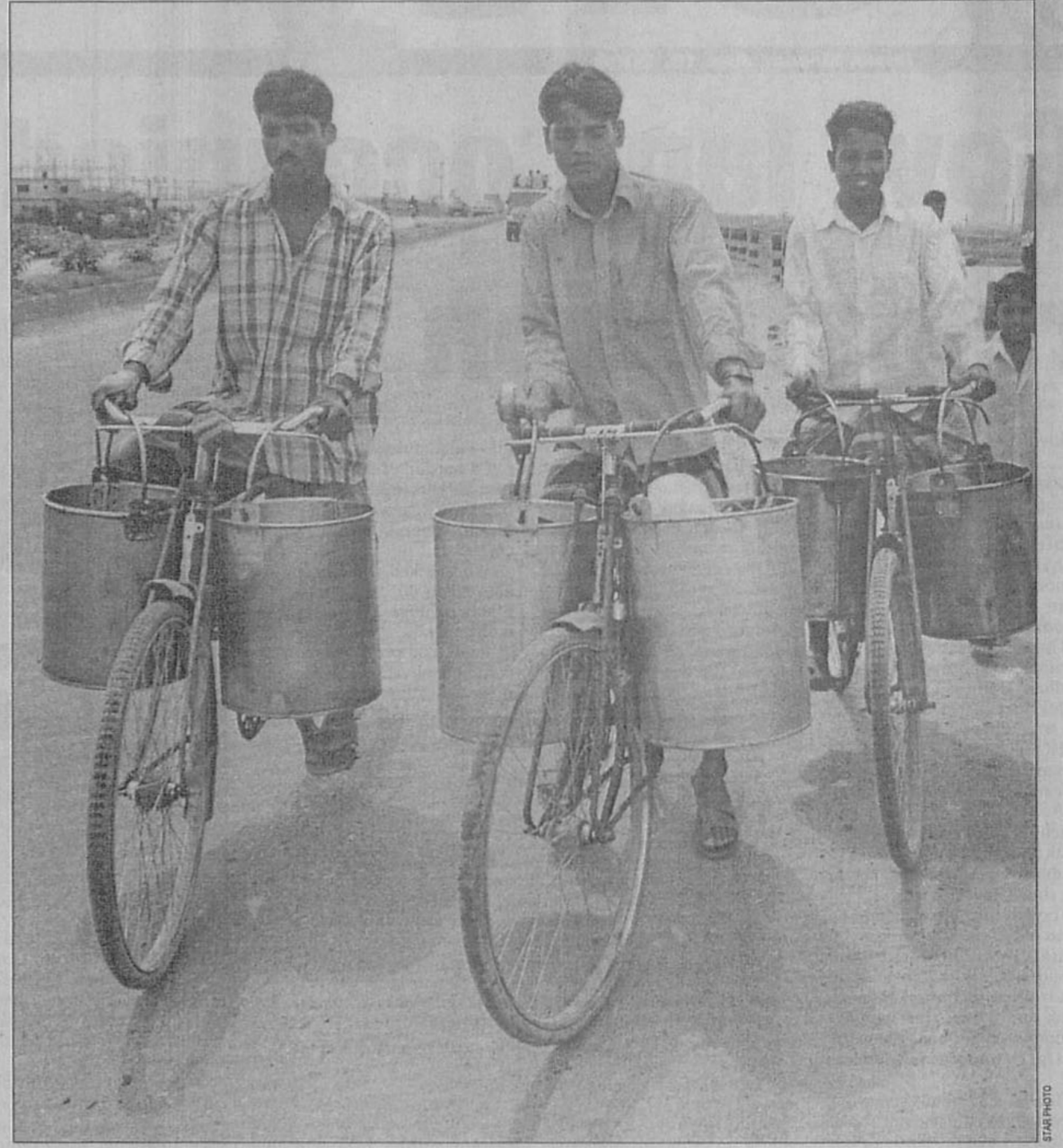
The forthcoming conference will discuss pedestrian safety, rural and urban safety, recording of accidents and their analysis, faulty road locations, road safety policy, funding, driver assessment, road safety engineering aspects and traffic laws and enforcement techniques.

Road safety audit, children's safety in road, road trauma management, heavy vehicle safety, community road safety and other issues will also get special focus on the conferences.

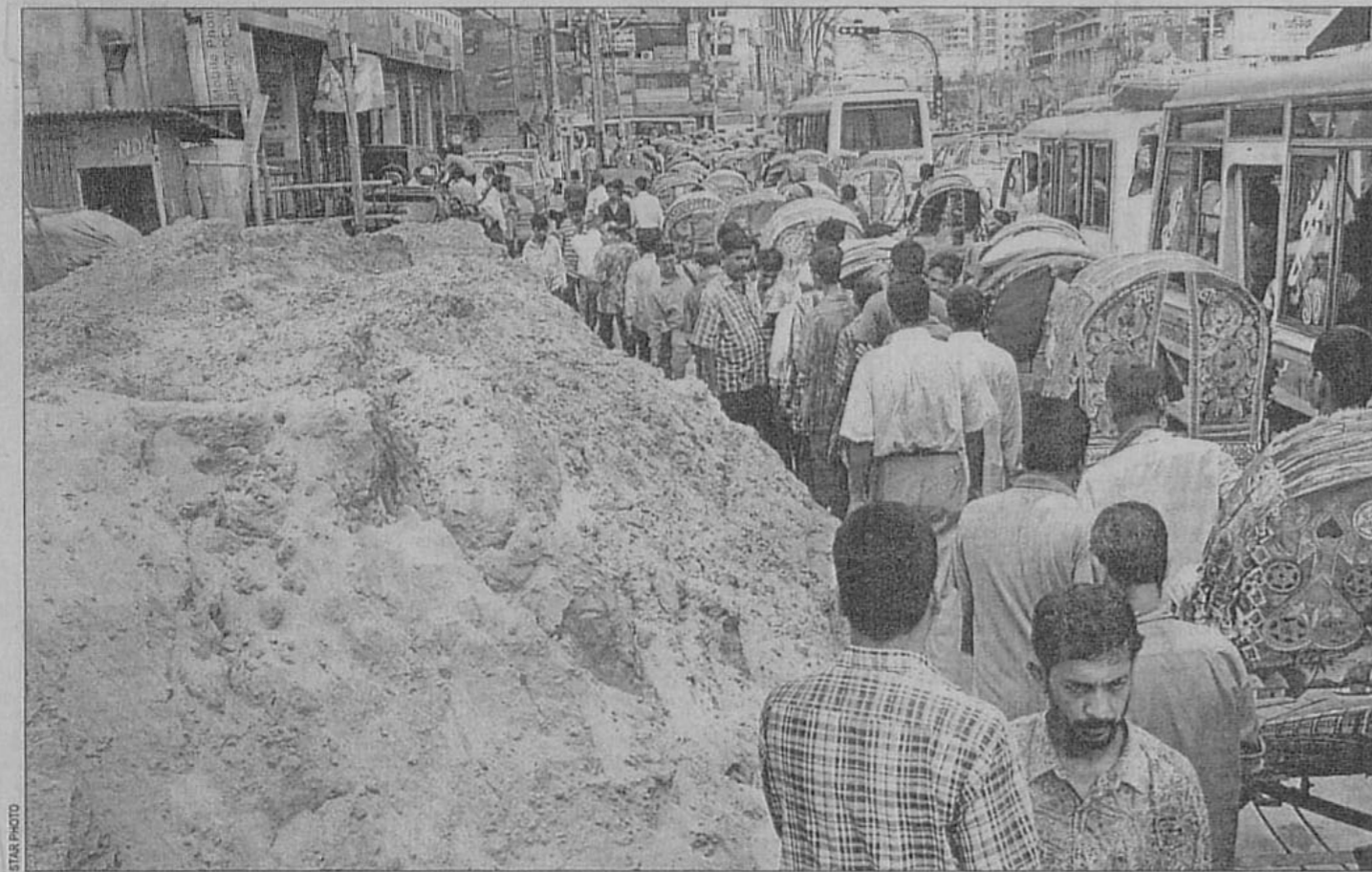
The organisers told Star City that they are expecting to develop a forum for sharing and exchanging the latest advances and experiences in addressing road safety challenges of the developing countries.

"Local participants, especially the policy makers and the professionals in particular will be benefited immensely by enhancing their knowledge from the presentations and discussions of the conference," Sudipta Sarker, member secretary of the centre told Star City.

Furthermore, the outcome of the conference will lead to create a greater road safety awareness among the public, drivers, operators and other road users, he added.



Milk traders come to the city from Shingair, Manikganj with up to 40 kg of milk each to sell in the big city markets and return on the same day. The picture was taken near Gabtoli on their way to Dhaka.



Building materials piled up at Topkhana Road just opposite the secretariat, have not only encroached the entire footpath causing inconvenience to pedestrians, but also a large part of the road hindering traffic movements.

Lack of awareness increases risk of Tuberculosis

MAHBUBA ZANNAT

Salma, a 22-year-old housewife of Comilla, has been divorced by her husband after she was diagnosed with tuberculosis of advanced level.

"I had been coughing for long seven months and sometimes caught fever. I was getting weaker but my husband and in-laws did not let me go to the doctors. At last I went to a private practitioner with one of my relatives, and the doctor said it's TB," said Salma.

"But could not continue taking medicines for six months due to lack of money," she said. "The doctors said I have to stay in hospital for long since it is tuberculosis in advanced level called multi-drug resistance tuberculosis (MDR-TB)."

"When my husband came to know that I will have to stay at the hospital for at least two years, he divorced me and married another girl. He said he needs someone to

maintain the family and take care of his parents," Salma told Star City.

Salma does not know where will she go after getting well. She has lost her own family. And in the meantime her mother also died.

Although TB is now 100 per cent curable disease, the patients have to face social stigma. People are not conscious about its proper treatment. The delay in diagnosis and irregular treatment lead to MDR-TB, said Prof Asif Mujtaba Mahmud of the National Institute of Diseases of the Chest and Hospital (NIDCH).

"This is not a unique case in the country. The women who diagnosed with TB are treated badly in society. While working in the field level we have found many housewives who had to come to their parents' house for treatment and go back to in-laws' house after getting well," said Akramul Islam, programme manager of TB, Brac.

"Many women especially who work in garment or other sectors fear to tell others about the disease -- they think they will lose their job. This is because people are still not aware of the disease and so uncaring about the treatment and medicines," he added.

Salma was admitted to NIDCH as the treatment of MDR-TB is complex and expensive. It requires direct and constant observation by doctors.

Under the Tuberculosis Control Programme the government provides treatment of TB free of cost. The comprehensive medicines need to be continued for six months without any break. But most people do not continue to take medicines when they feel better a few days after the treatment starts, said Prof Asif.

Discontinuation of treatment results in MDR-TB, treatment of which is more expensive and time consuming. The possibility of

cure is only 70 percent. It also needs direct supervision for two years and sometimes requires surgery.

"It develops only when people make delay in going to doctors and stop taking medicines without completing the course," Prof Asif added.

Dr Viquarunnessa Begum, programme manager of the National Tuberculosis Programme, said the male-female ratio of TB patients is 5:2. "As the women are less exposed than the men, they are less affected," she said.

The National TB Control Programme was initiated in 1993 with the target to identify 70 percent of the TB patients and cure at least 85 percent by 2015.

"But the awareness programme must be strengthened to achieve the target," Dr Viquarunnessa said. "However, it is a good sign that most people now know that TB is a curable disease," she added.

healthouting, taxicab & train timing

HEALTH

- Hospitals**
- Anjuman-e-Mofidul Islam 9336611, 7411660
 - BARDEM 8616641-50
 - Cholera Hospital (ICDDR) 8811751-60
 - CMH (Dhaka) 9870011
 - Dhaka Medical Collage Hospital 8628612-6
 - Holy Family Red Crescent 8311721-5
 - Islamia Eye Hospital 9119315, 8112156
 - Lion Eye Hospital 9129127
 - Medinova Medical Services 8620353-4
 - Mirpur General Hospital (Pvt) Ltd 9007873, 8015444
 - Mitford Hospital 7319002-6
 - National Heart Foundation Hospital 8014914, 8010491, 8021399
 - Orthopedic Hospital 9112150

- Salimullah Medical College Hospital 7319002-6
 - Samorita Hospital 9131901
 - Shahid Suhrawardi Hospital 9122560-78, 9112086, 8114856, 9130800
 - Shishu Hospital 8116061-2, 9119119
- Clinics**
- Akand Clinic 8015855, 8022581
 - Aroggaya Niketan 9333730
 - BAV.S Maternity 8016413-4
 - Dhaka Monorog Clinic 9005050
 - Gulshan Mother & Child Clinic 8822738, 8812992
 - Ibn Sina Clinic 8119513
 - Jahanara Clinic (Pvt) Ltd 8912929
 - Judi Maternity 9113322
 - Paltan Poly Clinic 9557385
 - Retina Eye Center (Clinic) 9884588, 9884566
 - Shishu Bekash Clinic 9351625

- The Eye Clinic 9333238
- Blood Bank**
- Red Crescent Centre- 9116563
 - Sandhani (DMCH)- 8624040
 - Sandhani (SMCH)- 7310061, 7310061, 7319022
 - Dhaka Medical Collage Hospital- 8626812-9
- Eye Bank**
- Sandhani International Eye Bank- 8614040
- Ambulances For**
- Dead Body**
- Anzuman Mafidul Islam (Kakrail) 9336611, Gandaria 7319308, 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-Thursday
- Ahsan Manzil-Thursday.
- 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

- Passenger's Complain**
- 01711-000990, 01711-000991, 01711-000992, DMP-999, 2627.
- Cab Salida Ltd. 9344477, 01711-620888, 01711-610405
 - Cosmo Cab Ltd. 9112959, 8127191, Nitai Cab Co. Ltd. 8125285, 01711-621953
 - JBS Cab Ltd. 0191-364575
 - Coal Cab Ltd 8130485, 01711-826731
 - Limujin Cab Ltd. 9318351, 9337204
 - Multi-Cab Ltd. 9666502, 9570740
 - Nihon Taxi Cab Ltd. 8624742,
- 8624741
 - Orion Taxi Cab Ltd. 934727, 9347277, 01711-155144
 - Reliance Cab Ltd. 9339563-4
 - RMS Cab Ltd. 8118536
 - Shatarupa Taxi Cab Ltd. 731083, 01711-458740
 - Tinni Cab Ltd. 9662009, 01711-645257
 - Teletaxi Cab Ltd. 7202201
 - Alif Cab Co. Ltd. 0191-357838, 83116948
 - Cab One Ltd. 9563054 Ext.-3077, 3178
 - United Cab Ltd. 7510166, 01711-
- 348474
 - Ulka Express Ltd. 9359885, 01711-313554
 - Cab Bangla Ltd. 9563077 Ext.-3054, 3178, 01711-622644
 - Cab I Ltd. 9563054, 9563077, 01711-629585
 - Cab line Ltd. 8321162
 - Capital Cab Co. Ltd. 9352847-9
 - Classic Cab Ltd. 200825, 01711-233851, 01711-812415
 - Comport Cab Ltd. 8817610-4
 - Cab Express Ltd. 9341369, 9339337, 9348401 Ext.-111
- TRAIN TIMING**
- Subarna Express
 - Mahanagar Prabhathi
 - Mahanagar Godhuli
 - Turna
 - Parabat Express
 - Joyantika Express
 - Upaban Express
 - Tista Express
 - Ekata Express
 - Upakul Express
 - Agnibeena Express
- Leaves Dhaka at 4:30 pm
 - Leaves Dhaka at 7:30 am
 - Leaves Dhaka at 3:15 pm
 - Leaves Dhaka at 11:00 pm
 - Leaves Dhaka at 6:40 am
 - Leaves Dhaka at 12:45 pm
 - Leaves Dhaka at 9:45 pm
 - Leaves Dhaka at 7:00 am
 - Leaves Dhaka at 5:00 pm
 - Leaves Dhaka at 8:00 pm
 - Leaves Dhaka at 9:20 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
 - Information Resource Center, The American Center - 8813440-4, 9886395-9
 - British Council- 8618867-8, 8618905-7
 - Community Development Library- 8113769, 8113604
 - Goethe Institute Int'l - Dhaka- 9126525-6
 - Indian Information Centre & Cultural Library- 8850141-2
 - The Russian Cultural Centre- 9116314, 9118531, 9118314
 - Drik Photo Gallery- 9120125, 8112954, 8123412
 - Press Institute of Bangladesh (PIB) 9330081-4