

Dhaka Day by Day

A Case for Three-wheelers

by M Kaiser Anwar Noel

Back in my early school years my History teacher once asked a question, "Boys tell me what is so special about this city?" We were only in fifth grade but smart enough not to answer that it is our capital, because that would have probably made it a very easy question for these so-called matured fifth graders. We paused for a while and looked at her face in a way that says what is so special about this city except for its being the capital of the nation? Mam with her ever smiling face answered her question, "Boys, this city is known for its hundreds of mosques, often called as a city of mosques."

Years have gone by. These days it looks like that we need to add something more to its name rather than its being the capital or the city of mosques, something more contemporary like city of three wheelers. I understand it sounds a little bit weird but honestly it is true. If you go out in the streets you will easily notice hundreds and hundreds of three wheelers all around you, ranging from rickshaws to baby taxis. They also come in two options — manually driven: rickshaws or vans and mechanically driven scooters or 80 cc Mishuks.

You may wonder why only call it a city of three wheelers, it goes for four wheelers also. But from the experience of our political crisis you will certainly give more preference to three wheelers than four wheelers. I guess the reason is quite simple, opposition parties are to some extent allergic towards four wheelers. Hartals, gheraos, non-cooperation allowed three wheelers to roam around in the capital

streets, but if four wheelers were seen during these events, they were set on fire. And since we have a history of political unrest so three wheelers have a considerable advantage here.

Hartal days seem to be the days for the three wheelers. Thousands of these are there in the streets. Absence of their more powerful elderly four wheeled rivals gives them the opportunity to enjoy the freedom of roads the way it pleases them.

Manually driven three wheelers have also attracted couple of international leaders. I remember Iranian president Rafsanjani showed keen interest in this particular vehicle during his visit to our country. He also took perhaps a model with him. Who knows pretty soon we will be seeing rickshaws paddling in the streets of Tehran! Or how about the picture that came out in various dailies showing US ambassador paddling a rickshaw and his better half sitting at the back.

Why only Tehran, rickshaws are already there in the Oxford streets. The BBC television showed how on improved version of the vehicle has been recommended to ply there. Oxford is long acknowledged for its intellectual supremacy, and the bustles made by the automobiles distract these intellectuals' concentration.

So who knows probably within a few years the government may declare this capital of ours as the city of three wheelers, considering its great popularity abroad or probably due to its outrageous growth in number — surpassing the total number of Dhakaites.



Weather

Rain at few places likely

Rain or thundershower with temporary gusty or squally wind may occur at one or two places over Dhaka, Sylhet and Rajshahi divisions and the regions of Comilla and Noakhali in the next 24 hours till 6 pm today, reports UNB.

Weather is likely to remain mainly dry elsewhere across the country. Met Office said adding that day temperature may remain nearly unchanged during the period.

Country's highest temperature 37 degrees Celsius was recorded at Rajshahi and the lowest 20 degrees at Comilla and Madaripur.

The sun sets today at 6:17 pm and rises tomorrow at 5:47 am.

The maximum and minimum temperatures and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday are:

City/Town	Temperature in Celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	Max	Min	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	34.4	25.0	78	53
Chittagong	31.0	22.8	86	78
Rajshahi	37.0	23.6	78	43
Khulna	35.2	24.2	82	70
Sylhet	31.4	22.0	72	69
Barisal	34.5	24.4	87	74
Cox's Bazar	31.8	22.0	78	86

Arms recovery drive at JU deplored

Pro-Awami League Chhatra League and Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) yesterday slated the law enforcing agencies for harassing the students in the name of illegal arms recovery from the Jahangirnagar University campus Tuesday, reports UNB.

Addressing a rally on the campus, the BCL leaders observed that the policemen had failed to recover illegal arms on the day and many arms holders have taken shelter in the university halls after the "so-called" raid. Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) demanded immediate withdrawal of the police. Meanwhile, the admission committee of the university at a recent meeting decided to distribute the first year honours admission forms from April 20 to May 19.



Advisor for Health and Family Welfare Major Gen (retd) Abdur Rahman speaking at the steering committee meeting of the National Immunisation Day in the city yesterday.

— UNESCO photo

'Urban population growth rate at crisis proportions'

Bangladesh is one of the countries experiencing rapid urbanization that threatened health, water supply, employment and social stability of its bustling urban centres, reports UNB.

The caution came yesterday from World Health Organisation (WHO) officials at a press briefing in the city, organised on the eve of World Health Day.

Addressing the briefing, WHO Resident Representative Dr W Hardjo Tanojo pointed out "explosive" urban population growth rate in Bangladesh, which reached crisis proportions at around 6-7 per cent in Dhaka and Chittagong.

According to Dr Tanojo, Bangladesh is one of the 35 developing countries facing the danger of explosion in urban population.

On the consequences of large-scale urbanization, he warned there would be severe short supply in civic amenities, including safe drinking water, and overcrowding would lead to rapid spread of communicable diseases.

Also, he said, unemployment might lead to "so-called social outburst" in the form of street violence and rising drug addiction.

Amidst alarming rise in urban population worldwide, particularly in developing countries, World Health Day this year focussed on the theme: "Healthy Cities for Better Life".

Explaining the WHO per-

JCD demands DUCSU polls immediately

By DU Correspondent

The Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD), the student wing of BNP, yesterday demanded DUCSU election during the interim period of the caretaker government.

JCD brought out a procession on the campus in the morning and held a rally at the Aparajeo Bangla.

Presided over by JCD DU unit president ABM Mosarraf Hossain, the rally was addressed by Fazlul Haq Milon, Muniruzzaman Monir, Shahiduddin Chowdhury Anney, Shirin Sultana, Nasir Uddin Pintu, Tarikul Islam Boni and Monwar Hossain Rana.

The JCD leaders said that the DUCSU election could not be held in the past due to violent protest by some student organisations, including the Awami League backed Chhatra League.

JCD leaders said that they were ready to contest DUCSU polls any time. But sensing defeat Bangladesh Chhatra League retreated from their commitments, they alleged.

Chhatra League foiled two initiatives by the university authorities to hold the DUCSU polls in the past, said Shahiduddin Chowdhury Anney.

UNB adds: At the end of the rally, JCD activists marched to the administrative building to submit a memorandum urging the VC Prof Emajuddin Ahmed to announce the date of election.

Ganotantik Chhatra Oikya, an alliance of left leaning student organisations, called upon the authorities to crack down on the terrorists.

Extended

The Bangladesh Open University (BOU) has extended the last date of admission into its SSC programme up to April 30, says a press release.

10-yr anniversary of C'wealth Writers Prize

The Commonwealth Writers Prize will celebrate its 10th anniversary in October 1996, in Harare, Zimbabwe, says a press release.

The Commonwealth Writers Prize was established in 1967, with the express purpose of highlighting major literary achievements within "The Club."

The Commonwealth Writers Prize is fully international in its character and administration. The entries are first assessed by regional panels of judges and the Commonwealth is divided into four regions: Africa, The Caribbean and Canada, Eurasia, and South East Asia and the South Pacific.

The results of the regional competitions will be released June/July and the prize winning authors will gather in Harare, from October 1-5 for the final round of judging. The distinguished winner in the Best Book category will receive 10,000 pounds and the winner in the Best First Published Book category will receive 3,000 pounds.

The Pan-Commonwealth Panel of Judges is chaired by Kgo Kgo Mudgele the Director of the Danhiko Project

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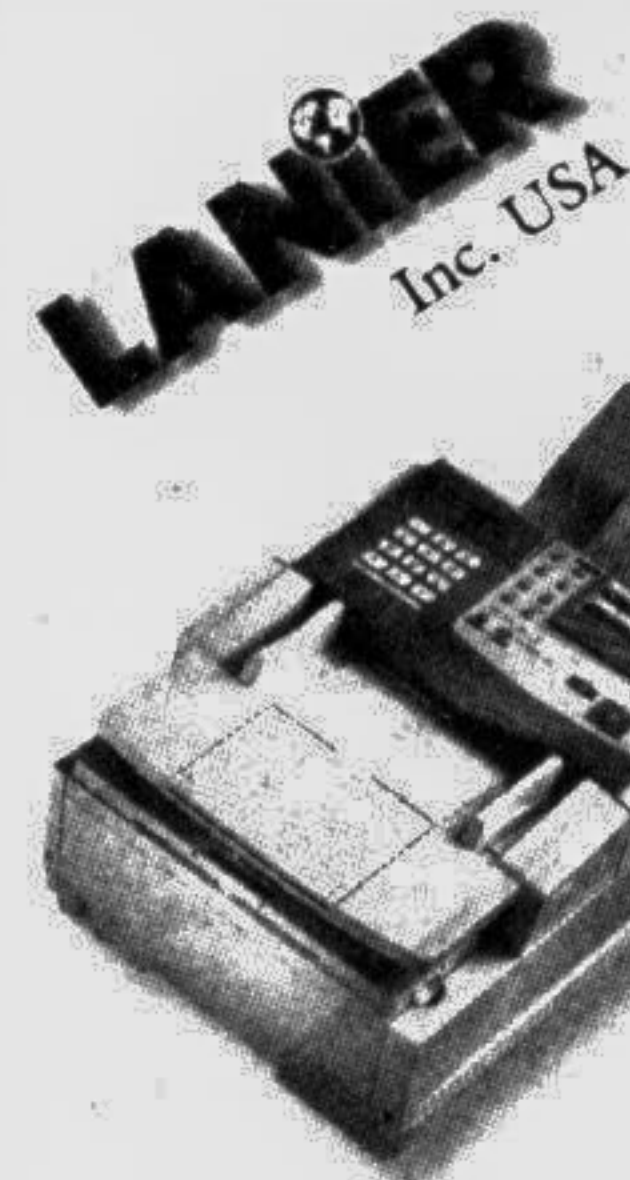
Dhaka Bangladesh

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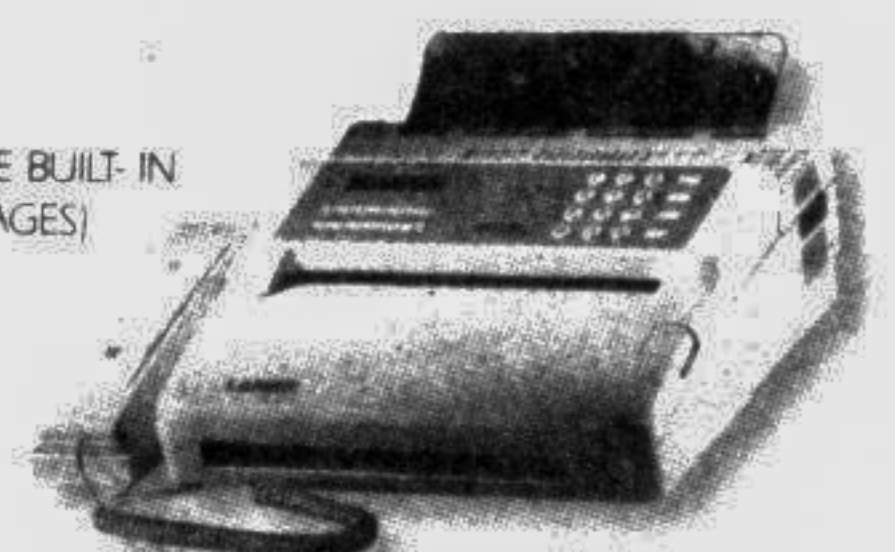
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4. Place for submission of Tender: Department of Supply & Inspection (4th floor), 48, Motiheel Commercial Area, Dhaka-1000.

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