

Tk 10 for first two kms fixed for 3-wheelers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government will enforce metering for four-stroke CNG-run three-wheelers in the city from November 1.

The Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA) fixed the fare at Tk 10 for the first two kilometres and Tk 4 for each next.

The decision was taken at a meeting Wednesday at the central office of the BRTA, where top officials of the traffic department of the Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) and others concerned were present.

Presided over by BRTA Chairman Mohammad Jalal Uddin, the meeting also decided that three-wheeler drivers have to be uniformed in navy blue.

The meeting sources said the BRTA fixed the fare, considering the fare of black taxicabs at Tk 15 for the first two kilometres and Tk 6 for each next.

Advocate Shamsur Rahman Shimul Biswas, board member of the executive committee of the BRTA and chairman of the Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Corporation (BIWTC), Abu Musa Mohammad Fakrul Islam Khan, deputy commissioner of traffic (south) and Anwarul Islam Tareq, director of the Navana Limited, among others, attended the meet

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Turag taken over... unscrupulous sand traders have extended their reach deep into the river near the Amin Bazaar Bridge on the outskirts of the capital, as the authorities turn a blind eye.

PHOTO: STAR

World Tourism Day today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The World Tourism Day (WTD) will be observed today in Bangladesh as elsewhere in the world.

This year, the theme of WTD is "Ecotourism: The Key to Sustainable Development".

This is the 23rd World Tourism Day, observed at the call of the World Tourism Organisation (WTO). The government and private sector tour operators will observe the day through various programmes to promote tourism.

The WTD has a special significance this year as the United Nations earlier declared the year 2002 as "International Year of Ecotourism".

President Iajuddin Ahmed in a message on the occasion said the private sector, along with the public sector, should come forward to promote tourism and to make the people aware of its social, economic and environmental importance.

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia in her message said besides helping people acquire knowledge and being a source of entertainment, tourism greatly promotes international solidarity, peace and cooperation in developing countries like Bangladesh.

WTO Secretary General Francesco Frangialli in his message

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	Sun Rises	Sun Sets
Sept 27		5-50 pm
Sept 28	5-48 am	

Prayer Timings		
Sept 27		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-40	5-10
Juma	12-30	1-20
Asr	4-30	4-45
Maghrib	5-55	6-00
Esha	7-45	8-15

Source: Islamic Foundation

Govt, protestors face off over Shaheed Minar rule

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Defying the 'sealing off' of the Central Shaheed Minar, various socio-cultural and political organisations are going to hold rallies and demonstrations there while the government seems determined to continue the present state.

The government on Sunday decided to strictly enforce the existing rules that require prior permission from the Dhaka University authorities for any rally or demonstration at the Shaheed Minar.

As the decision sparked off widespread protests and criticisms from various sections of people,

polymakers of the BNP government held a series of meetings on the issue on Wednesday.

Sources said the meetings decided that the government would remain firm on its decision prohibiting all kinds of gathering or rally on the Minar premises without permission from the authorities concerned.

However, some sources seeking anonymity said the meetings discussed the impact of 'sealing off' of the Minar on public mind. Some of the BNP polymakers expressed 'dissatisfaction' over this and suggested withdrawal of it. They noted that the government decision in this regard has caused an 'adverse reaction' and made it 'controversial'

to the people.

The meetings were attended by the home minister, state minister for home, education minister, state minister for education, home secretary and political secretary to the prime minister.

An official handout said the meetings decided that necessary measures would be taken to ensure law and order and security at the Shaheed Minar and the educational institutions around it.

The handout issued by the home ministry termed the Shaheed Minar a national pride and a symbol of the historic Language Movement. "Shaheed Minar is linked with the emotion and feeling of each coun-

tryman," it said.

It also said that the struggle for liberation originated from the Language Movement of 1952 and since then people come to the Shaheed Minar to pay tribute to the martyrs of that movement. This will continue in the future.

The authorities sealed off the Minar premises on September 8 to prevent students of the Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET) from staging a demonstration there. Since then no rally or gathering was allowed there.

In the last two weeks, various organisations tried to hold their programmes there, but police pre-

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Rare unity for port city development

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Chittagong

Ignoring a boycott call by Chittagong city unit of the ruling BNP, four ministers and a number of leaders and activists of the BNP and the main opposition Awami League (AL) attended the inaugural ceremony of Chaktai Khal Excavation Project here yesterday.

Minister for Local Government and Rural Development (LGRD) and BNP Secretary General Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan was the chief guest at the function, organised by Mayor of Chittagong City Corporation (CCC) and city AL leader ABM Mohiuddin Chowdhury, who also chaired it.

Mannan Bhuiyan inaugurated

the Tk 15-crore project with a call for united efforts by all for development of the country. "We may have differing views in politics. But we would and should work together when development of the country is concerned."

The function held at Omar Ali Market was also attended by food minister and BNP central leader Abdullah Al-Noman, LGRD state minister Ziaul Haq Zia and deputy minister Ruhul Quddus Talukder.

About five thousand people gathered at the venue spontaneously to hear leaders of the two rival political parties at the same function.

Mannan Bhuiyan said, "Devel-

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PHOTO: STAR

Chittagong Mayor ABM Mohiuddin Chowdhury (L) leads a prayer at the inauguration of the Chaktai Khal Excavation Project in the port city yesterday. On his left are Food Minister Abdullah Al-Noman and LGRD and Co-operative Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan.



PHOTO: STAR

Children take interest in books at a stall at the four-day SAARC Book Fair 2002, inaugurated yesterday at the Shilpakala Academy auditorium yesterday.

A refreshing event for bookworms

SABRINA KARIM

Sharing socio-cultural aspects among the countries of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) through different programmes is common.

But an event on publications of the SAARC countries, beginning yesterday in the city, is refreshingly new.

It is the "First SAARC Book Fair 2002" organised by the Bangladesh Publishers' Council in association with the SAARC Book Development Council. The fair will help people fathom cultural, social and economic aspects of the neighbouring countries, the organisers hope.

The royal blue portal of the Shilpakala Academy adorned with the national flags of SAARC countries offers a warm welcome to bookworms to the 52 stalls at the four-day fair.

The fair has given a wide opportunity to the publishers of the SAARC countries to exchange views and opinions about the industry, said most participants.

"Discussions and roundtables during the fair will draw a solution to book piracy," said Farid Ahmed, convener of the reception sub-committee of the fair.

However, the participants and the organisers have said the fair is not meant for commercial benefits. "We are here only to introduce our publica-

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Child patients caught in DMCH quagmire

No operation theatre for paediatric ward

NAIMUL HAQ

Children admitted to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) for emergency surgeries have to wait for months together, which results in deaths in extreme cases, as there is no paediatric operation theatre.

Doctors at the paediatric surgery department get into confrontation with general surgeons of the hospital almost every day over use of operation theatres, said sources.

At least ten children at the 23-bed paediatric surgery department are waiting for emergency surgeries.

One-year-old Touhid died last month due to non-availability of an operation theatre despite efforts by the surgeons.

Last year, doctors were desperately looking for an operation theatre to carry out a surgery on the child three days after his birth with intestine perforation at the hospital. And an ongoing operation had to be put on hold to save Touhid's life.

Touhid had a perforation in the intestine causing serious toxicity in

the body.

About a year later, Touhid came back to the DMCH with similar perforations or Hirschsprung's disease for an emergency surgery. But no operation theatre was available on August 27.

Toxicity spread to other parts of his body by the time surgeons repaired the perforations after a six-hour wait. Twelve days later, the boy died in the hospital.

"Had we been able to carry out an immediate surgery, the boy might have survived. I believe toxicity deteriorated the boy's condition due to the delay," said a senior doctor of the DMCH preferring anonymity.

"I have been insulted several times trying to get an OT (operation theatre) for emergency surgeries," said the doctor.

"We receive seriously ill patients referred by hospitals and clinics in the city and outside. Unfortunately, we don't have adequate arrangements to cope with such a rush."

Four-year-old Shamima had to leave the DMCH after a two-month wait for a lifesaving (colostomy) operation and was readmitted on

September 12. This time round, Shamima is waiting for her surgery.

One-year-old Malek from Demra was admitted on September 17 with an enlarged stomach and is waiting for an emergency operation.

Nine-month-old Lily and eight-month-old Shaon, both suffering from uterus and abdomen tumour, are waiting for emergency surgeries.

"We have scheduled one operation every 15 days. There are three units under the paediatric surgery department, so we carry out three operations in 15 days," said a doctor of the department.

The DMCH has repeatedly requested the health directorate to allocate a separate operation theatre, but to no avail.

"We need at least one operation theatre of our own. We get frustrated, confronting the same thing every day," said a senior surgeon on condition of anonymity.

Other senior doctors have said the health directorate is well aware of the problems but has neither tried to solve the problem nor suggested an alternative.

Teenager slaughtered in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Unidentified persons slaughtered a boy, Mohammad Alauddin, 16, at Mirbagh in the city's Ramna area yesterday.

Police recovered his body from a water body in the area.

The victim's uncle said he (Alauddin) was called out of his residence by one of his friends, Nannu, on Wednesday night. Since then he was missing.

On information, family members went to Dhaka Medical College Hospital and identified the body.

Alauddin was the son of Babul Talukder, a repatriate from Dubai. The motive behind the killing could not be known immediately.

The duty officer at Ramna Police Station said last night no case was filed yet in this regard.

Seven new DCs

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government reshuffled the district administration yesterday, appointing seven deputy commissioners (DCs) and transferring four others.

It also made Bureau of Anti-corruption (BAC) director Abdus Salam Khan official on special duty (OSD) and gave fresh postings to three already-promoted mid-level officials.

According to an official notification circulated yesterday, seven deputy secretaries of different ministries and divisions have been made DCs.

Proshanta Bushan Barua of the Economic Relations Division (ERD), Abdul Mannan Hawlader of Land Record and Survey, Zonal Settlement Officer of Barisal Farhad Uddin, Chief Executive Officer of Chittagong Zila Parishad H u m a y u n

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Food secretary made OSD over wheat scam

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Food Secretary Abdul Latif Mandal was made officer on special duty (OSD) on Wednesday for his alleged involvement in gross irregularities in this year's internal wheat procurement drive.

Mandal made the number of officials made OSDs for involvement in the wheat scam eight.

Three of the OSDs have meanwhile been sent into retirement.

Before Mandal, Abdus Sattar Mia and Entajul Huque, director general and additional director general of the food directorate respectively; KA Rob and Fakhru Islam, regional controllers of food of Dhaka and Rajshahi respectively; and Kamrul Hasan and Nurul Afsar, deputy controllers of food respectively of Mymensingh and Bogra, were made OSDs.

Huque, Rob and Islam were sent into retirement on September 9.