

Repair battered Mohakhali road

Traffic deptt finally asks transport board

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Traffic Department of the Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) has finally asked the authorities to repair the rundown road at Mohakhali, which it says is clogging traffic at the intersection.

In a letter last week of September, it asked the Dhaka Transport Coordination Board (DTCB) to reconstruct the run-down road, between two intersections from Mohakhali to Kakali.

The traffic department said scores of potholes riddle the road, leading to immense sufferings of the commuters.

Upon receipt of the letter, the DTCB has asked the Roads and Highway Department (RHD) and Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) -- the two implementing departments

for repairing roads and footpaths -- to fix the stretch of the road.

"We have asked the Roads and Highway Department and the DCC to construct the road as early as possible. The condition of the road is really bad," said Quamrul Islam Siddiqui, executive director of the DTCB.

The RHD was supposed to repair the road in the Mohakhali flyover area and the DCC to maintain the roads and footpaths up to Mohakhali area from the flyover end. The responsibility of the DTCB was to co-ordinate and supervise their work.

The road between the two intersections has been run down for more than a year, decreasing vehicle speed and creating traffic chaos. The flyover project started in December 2001 and is sched-

uled to end in next June. However, most of the flyover construction remains incomplete.

At the Mohakhali intersection, the road has been reduced to a mere lane due to the construction of the flyover and people have been forced to walk down the main corridor as the footpath was very narrow and poorly maintained.

During the rush hours, it generally takes around half an hour to go about one kilometre distance from Mohakhali Rail Crossing to Kakali intersection. The traders have occupied the whole walkway of the area.

The chief engineer of the DCC, supposed to maintain the walkway, could not be reached.



Members of the Andha Kalyan Samity, a welfare organisation for the visually challenged, take out a rally in Dhaka to mark World White Cane Day yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

20 hurt as students, transport workers clash

OUR CORRESPONDENT, N'ganj

At least 20 were injured and five buses damaged during a clash between students and transport workers at the central bus stand in the town yesterday morning.

Sources said the clash ensued when Kawsar, vice-president of Narayanganj College Student Union and college lecturer Biraj Saha were beaten up by transport workers during an altercation after a bus rear-ended theirickshawat around 10:30am.

Transport workers also reportedly tried to abduct Kawsar and his three friends present at the spot. Shortly afterwards, some 50 angry students from the nearby college campus rushed to the scene and damaged at least five buses.

In the ensuing clash between the two groups, at least 10 people from each side were injured before Narayanganj police brought the situation under control.

Transport workers put up a barricade on the road bringing vehicular traffic to a halt till 3:30pm.

JU teachers go on strike demanding VC's removal

JU CORRESPONDENT

The Jahangirnagar University Teachers' Association (Juta) on Tuesday decided to indefinitely boycott all classes and examinations of the university to press for their two-point demand including removal of the JU vice-chancellor (VC).

The other Juta demand is punishment to Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) activists who confined the provost and house tutors of Shaheed Salam Barkat Hall on August 11.

The decision to enforce the strike, effective from yesterday, was taken at a general meeting on campus chaired by Juta President Prof Amin Mohammad Ali. Some 80 J

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Women students confine JU VC, pro-VCs for water crisis at 3 halls

JU CORRESPONDENT

Hundreds of women students of Jahangirnagar University yesterday confined the vice-chancellor, two pro-VCs and the treasurer to the JU administrative building for three hours during a frenzied demonstration against a water crisis in three women's dormitories.

The agitators also cut off power and telephone lines to the VC's residence and the administrative building and issued a 24-hour

ultimatum to the authorities to resolve the water crisis staggering since September 23.

Jahanara Imam, Pritilata and Nawab Faizunnesa halls plunged into the 22-day water crisis after a pump went out of order.

A stick procession by the students exploded into an angry demonstration near the administrative building and the demonstrators confined VC Prof Jasim Uddin Ahmad, pro-VCs Prof M Imamuddin and Dr Enamul Huq Khan and

Treasurer Prof ABM Enayet Hossain shortly before 12:00 noon when they were at a meeting.

The demonstration also left hundreds of employees of the building trapped inside as the students locked all seven gates.

The authorities postponed all examinations from October 16 to October 23 in the wake of the protest that also prevented other teachers and employees from commuting to Dhaka.

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Onion price shoots 49pc

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The price of onions has leaped by 49 percent in the last month, according to the Trading Corporation of Bangladesh (TCB).

The TCB also reported an increase of 4.65 per cent in the price of soybeans, 9.68 per cent in the price of chilies, 12 per cent in the price of chicken and 2.85 percent in the price of garlic.

The commerce ministry held a meeting yesterday, chaired by Commerce Minister Amir Khosru Mahmud

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Shift navy ships from channel

Probe body on Ctg Port collision recommends

BSS, Ctg

The sensitive Bangladesh Navy fleet and valuable equipment should be shifted from the vulnerable Chittagong Port channel to avoid further risk from reckless vessel movement and collision.

The committee to probe the recent collision of two ships in Chittagong Port channel has made the recommendation, official sources said.

The Chittagong Port Authority (CPA) formed the five-member probe committee headed by its Director (Security) Lt Col Sarwar Shahid immediately after the collision on the night of September 21.

The committee is likely to submit its report to the CPA chairman today.

The collision between the Bangladesh flag carrier Banga Biraj and the Panamanian flagship Eagle Strength caused extensive damage

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Hartal called in Rangpur today to protest BCL man's killing

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangpur

Rangpur district unit of Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) will enforce a day-long hartal in the town today protesting the brutal murder of its activist Rashidul Islam Hitler by Chhatra Shibir cadres on the Carmichael College campus on Tuesday.

Chhatra League leaders announced the hartal programme at a press conference at its office yesterday. They also demanded immediate arrest of the Shibir cadres involved in the killing.

Shibir cadres beat up Hitler and severed tendons of his legs at the

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Wildcat strike by Sylhet postal workers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

The officials and employees of Sylhet Head Post Office went on a wild-cat strike yesterday, putting the office complex under lock and key for 5 hours to protest the arrest of a post office night guard and two night guards of the neighbouring market yesterday morning.

The strikers unlocked the main gate of the post office at 1:30 pm after the night guards were released.

According to the police and other sources, at about 7:30 am, some ward commissioners led by Ariful Haque Chowdhury, General Secretary of Sylhet district BNP, went to the post office and asked the vendors to vacate the footpath in front of the post office complex immediately.

The vendors denied the request, pleading that they made regular payments to some night guards of the post office and the nearby market for permission use the footpath. The commissioners then called the

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PHOTO: AKM MOHSIN

An overloaded truck bound for Paturia in Manikganj waits to cross the Padma river by ferry. Trucks packed beyond capacity are a menace to traffic on the highways and ferries. The excess weight also wears down roads fast.

8-hour hartal in Ctg today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

The Greater Chittagong Development Action Committee (GCDAC) enforces an eight-hour hartal in the district from 6.00am today.

The hartal was called for upgrading the port city as commercial capital, improvement of law and order, and selection of Moeshkhali as the site for proposed deep seaport.

The committee yesterday held meetings with cross section of people and rallies in different parts of the city in support of the hartal.

In a press statement, the committee also called upon all to make the programme a success.

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Three to die for killing businessman at Savar

UNB, Dhaka

The Speedy Trial Tribunal-4, Dhaka, yesterday sentenced three people, two in absentia, to death for killing a businessman at Savar in 2001.

The convicts are Ataur Rahman Mridha, 30, and Anwar Hossain, 29, of Gouripur village and Kamal, 28, of Changaon village in Savar.

Of them, Ataur is now in custody while Anwar and Kamal are still at large.

According to the prosecution, the accused gunned down businessman Zaman, 27, of village Gouripur in Savar upazila, near Charbagh

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Revenue target falls Tk 38.57cr short for low imports

REJAUL KARIM BYRON

As imports of a number of commodities have been lower than the projection, the government's targeted revenue collection in the first three months of the current fiscal falls Tk 38.57 crore short.

The current fiscal envisages a 20 percent revenue growth, but it grew by only 9.30 percent in the first quarter.

According to a report of the National Board of Revenue (NBR), tax and duties from import falls short by Tk 59.34 crore. In addition, other taxes and duties fall Tk 13.6 crore short of the target.

But the good news is that revenue collection in the form of taxes

and duties at local level has exceeded the target by Tk 29.53 crore and income tax exceeded the target by Tk 4.8 crore. These two factors have cut down the level of revenue shortfall.

The NBR says compared to the corresponding period of last year, the imports of sugar, bitumen, oil seed, edible oil, cement clinker, motor cars, spices, machinery and spare parts and other main import items were much lower.

"During the current fiscal, the duty slab on import has been reduced. This has also affected the revenue collection," a high official of the NBR said.

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Author with murky past wins Booker

REUTERS, London

Controversial author DBC Pierre, better known for his murky past than his writing prowess, on Tuesday won the Booker prize, one of the world's top literary awards for fiction, for his debut novel "Vernon God Little".

He promptly pledged to give his 50,000 pound (\$82,930) prize to his creditors after one of the most startling prize-givings in the 35-year

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Some Indian states favour river project

PALLAB BHATTACHARYA, New Delhi

New Delhi has claimed several Indian states favour the multi-billion-dollar project for linking rivers across the country.

Additional Water Resources Secretary Radha Singh told reporters here Tuesday evening that Suresh Prabhu, head of the Task Force on Inter Linking of Rivers, had met chief ministers of a good number of states recently and they had come out with a positive response to the project.

Singh said the project was found feasible and talks would be held with Bangladesh, Nepal and Bhutan on it.

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JS body fears fallout from river-link plan

REAZ AHMAD

A parliamentary body yesterday expressed deep concern at a giant Indian river-link project to re-channel waters of transboundary rivers that it worries would pose serious threats to Bangladesh.

The Parliamentary Standing Committee on the Ministry of Water Resources also endorsed a recommendation to seek more budgetary allocation for harnessing water resources as the sector holds immense potential.

Emerging from the meeting at

the Sangsad Bhaban, Water Resources Minister Hafiz Uddin Ahmad said he apprised the committee of the outcome of last month's Indo-Bangla Joint Rivers Commission (JRC) meeting in New Delhi where India assured Bangladesh of discussion on the \$200 billion project on receipt of a taskforce report on the plan.

But if India went ahead with implementation of the project, Hafiz feared it would be disastrous for Bangladesh, which depends largely on cross-boundary rivers including the Ganges and Brahmaputra for

dry season water.

M A Matin, chairman of the parliamentary body and a BNP lawmaker, chaired the first meeting of committee held three months after its constitution.

After the formation of the committee by the Jatiya Sangsad in mid-July, its chairman was changed once and its previous chairman Ebadur Rahman Chowdhury passed his brief stint without holding a

single

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