

Toll-takers in guise of owners' associations

15-point 'remedy' for transport sector

AVIK SANWAR RAHMAN

Unauthorised toll collection in the transport sector by the owners' associations has been singled out as one of the basic causes for fare hike and increase in price of essential commodities in a report by a high powered committee.

Headed by the communication secretary, the committee was formed to identify ways to stop illegal toll collection in the transport sector. It came up with a 15-point proposal.

The committee was critical of the current practice of issuing registration of transport associations by both the commerce and labour ministries. This has given birth to innumerable associations across Dhaka even, many of which are responsible for illegal toll collection.

The commerce ministry is issuing Trade Organisation (TO) licenses to one association in each district according to the TO ordinance 1961 and TO rules 1994.

But the ministry of labour is also giving away TO licenses in every district.

"The labour ministry should be restricted to the issuing license to labour associations and not to the owners' association which is the responsibility of the commerce ministry. There are even one-person associations active in illegal toll collection and other irregularities in the transport sector," said an official of the commerce ministry.

The commerce ministry has suggested the committee to change the registration law of labour ministry so that its role regarding license is clearly defined.

"The associations are formed for the betterment of the members. But in reality it

serves the personal interest of the leaders of the associations," said a transport owner.

"There are associations where the president might have only one bus but has members who own more than twenty buses. These members have to continue paying illegal toll to the association just to keep themselves in business," said a member of a transport association.

Taking advantage of their legal status, leaders of transport associations often disrupt movement of vehicles, create anarchy or call strikes if anything goes against the personal interest.

"They don't bother about public interest. They are so powerful that even the government's transport service, the BRTC, had to withdraw their buses from certain routes causing much suffering to the people," said an official of BRTC on condition of anonymity.



khilgaon flyover project is limping although over 70 percent of the total work have been finished.

All about the dead on computers

DCC plans death registrations database

CITY CORRESPONDENT

The Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) is planning to computerise death registrations on a database, which will store information about the deceased and their burial location also.

The process is expected to help family members, relatives and close associates trace more easily the final resting-place of their loved ones at the five DCC owned graveyards in Azimpur, Mirpur, Jurain, Uttara and Banani.

The city dwellers at present have trouble getting proper information about the dead at the DCC graveyards. Many do not have a clue regarding where the burials had taken place a long time ago.

"Although the graveyard authorities record death information manually, it is not easy to provide information about the persons who had been buried many years ago. As a result, families often fail to locate the graves of their ancestors," said an official of social welfare department of the DCC.

A lot of registered documents about the deaths have been damaged beyond recognition and many more face the same fate as they are too old to be preserved.

The plan to make a computerised list of registered deaths is at its initial stage and the estimated cost is about Tk. 1.5 lakh. The documentation process will be centrally preserved and will

include information of all the dead at the five graveyards with a location map.

As the graveyards are struggling to accommodate space, it's no longer possible to buy land for burial. In the absence of a convenient identifying mechanism, those who have family members buried at those places, ultimately lose track of the location and can not use the space in the future for other deaths in the family.

According to DCC statistics, about a hundred deceased persons are buried in the five cemeteries every day.

Azimpur graveyard, the largest, has to accommodate about 35 dead bodies a day. This graveyard is facing the most severe space

constraint. Most part of its approximately 17-acre area is supposed to be ploughed and made ready for burial of new bodies every two years. But the demand for burial space is so high that the authorities have been forced to plough whenever the land is filled up.

"My mother died three years ago. Since her death, I have seen two other burials on the same spot as my mother's," said Nadia whose mother is buried at the Azimpur graveyard.

"I visit her grave regularly so I know its location. But those who come occasionally would be really confused," she added.

SABRINA KARIM MURSHED

The under construction Khilgaon flyover appears destined to miss its June 2004 completion deadline as a number of factors has delayed the progress of the work.

Back in November, Local Government and Engineering Department (LGED) officials told The Daily Star that the flyover would be completed by June 30. However, the same people are now saying that it could take more time although almost 70 percent of the total work have been finished.

The Tk. 74 crore project has

already failed to meet its original deadline. Work started in September 2001 and was supposed to be completed in February 2003.

The construction has slowed down as the LGED is not receiving funds in time. "We have been provided only Tk 33.90 crore of the Tk. 74 crore budget from the government until now," said a project official. He added that the LGED was unable to pay the bills it owes to the contractor of the flyover because of the fund constraint.

Unusual rise in the price of iron rods in recent times has also contributed to the delay.

"Price of iron rods we use for construction increased by at

least 25 per cent over the last few months due to a strike by ship breakers in Chittagong. The supply too has decreased considerably as the ship-breaking industry is the main provider of iron rods," said an official of LGED.

Construction has been hampered also because of complications in land acquisition. The LGED is yet to receive official approvals from Bangladesh Railway (BR) and the Public Works Department (PWD) for acquiring stretches of land in Sayedabad and Razarbagh areas to build ramps and loops for the flyover. Most of the property in question belongs to the BR and some to the PWD.

Project official said that a demarcation wall in Sayedabad, which is owned by BR, has to be demolished and some furniture shops in Razarbagh have to be relocated for the flyover's construction.

Rejaul Karim, who was the Director General of BR then, had reportedly agreed to hand over land to the LGED during a meeting on December 23, 2003. However, the LGED cannot demolish any structure or acquire anything based on that approval as it was only verbal.

The flyover when completed will have three wings connecting Khilgaon, Razarbagh and Syedabad. The total length of it will be 2,505 meters.



They Move Like Seasonal Birds

Hunger drives them out of their home. Every December they flock to capital in quest of job. Thousands of day-labourers become unemployed after the *Katamari* (Aman harvest) in the northern districts. During the next harvest they again go back to their villages. And this has become the order of their life.

useful telephonenumber numbers

OURIER SERVICES

International
Air Borne Express- 9561371, 9561372, 9550724
Air Couriers Int'l (BD) Ltd.- 8815970
Aramex International Courier- 9558003, 9559582, 9565075
Airspeed Express- 9563494
Asian Courier Services Ltd.- 8313543
Baishakhi Courier Service- 9558606
Banmgladesh Express Co. Ltd.- 9565114
Bangladesh Courier Servive- 9563989
Bengal Express- 9560642, 9552666
Bangladesh Int'l Courier- 953636
Continental Service Ltd.- 9552948, 9558425
DHL Worldwide Express- 9881703-7, 9886305-9, 9882057

Enem Express- 9330699
Fedex Bangladesh Express Co. Ltd.- 9565114
Modhuban Courier Service- 9550884
Overseas Courier Service- 9352431, 8321169
Pacific Courier- 9568446
Reliance Express Service- 9558515, 7110249
Sky International service- 9660442
Skynet world Wide Express- 9558062, 9560258, 7114787, 7113184
TNT Express- 9566662, 9558239, 8618155
Union Courier Service- 9341722
United Parcel Service Air alliance Ltd- 8826429, 8810223

National
Asian courier Service Ltd-

8313543
BAE- 9884851
Central Courier Service- 9881118
Confidence Courier Service Ltd. 9567036
Chisty Courier- 7110177-9,
Cosmopol Services- 9552793, 9557975
Dhaka Courier Services- 7236222
Dolphin Courier- 9558802
Dreamland Courier Service- 9550326, 9566975
Pioneer Courier Services- 9561727, 9560759

TIPS
Do you know according to Dhaka City Corporation, you must deposit your waste at the collection site

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

LIBRARY & INFO-

Museum and Zoo
National Museum- 8619396-9
Open: 10 am 5 pm, Friday 3 pm- 8 pm, Thursday closed
Muktijuddha Jadughar- 9559091
Open: 10:30 am 6:30 pm, Sunday Closed
Bangabandhu Smiti Jadughar- 8110046
Open: 10 am 5 pm, Friday: 3 pm - 7 pm, Thursday Closed
Shishu Jadughar- 9666466
Open: 10 am- 6 pm, Sunday Closed

OUTING

Bus No.	Route	Starts from	
1	Gulistan-Shahbagh-Banglamotor-Farmgate-Mirpur 10, 11, 12		Golap Shah Mazar
2	Gulistan-Shahbagh-Banglamotor-Farmgate-Mirpur 1, 2		Phoolbaria bus station
3	Gulistan-Shahbagh-Farmgate-Mahakhali-Airport-Azampur		Phoolbaria bus station
4	Shyampur-Motijheel-Shahbagh-Farmgate-Airport-Tongi		Shyampur
5	Sayedabad-Kamalapur-Motijheel-Airport-Joydebpur-Gazipur		Sayedabad
6 A	Kamalapur-Motijheel-Gulistan-Shahbagh-Farmgate-Gulistan 1, 2		Kamalapur
6 B	Kamalapur-Motijheel-Gulistan-Maghbazar-Nabisco-Gulshan 1, 2		Kamalapur
6 C	Motijheel Shapla chattar- Malibagh- Farmgate- Gulshan 2		Motijheel Shaplachattar
7	Sadarghat-Gulistan-Maghbazar-Nabisco-Gulshan 2		Sadarghat
8	Chittagong-Motijheel-Shahbagh-Farmgate-Asad Gate-Kalyanpur-Gabtol		Chittagong Road
9	Demra Rani mahal-Motijheel-Kalbagan-Shyamoli-Mirpur 1, 10, 11, 12		Demra Ranimahar
10	Sadarghat-Gulistan-Kakrail-Malibagh-Rampura-Biwsa Road-Tongi Bridge		Sadarghat
11	Sayedabad-Motijheel-Fakirapool-Maghbazar-Mohakhali-Tongi Bridge		Sayedabad
11/A	Sayedabad-Khilgoan-Malibagh-Rampura-Airport-Tongi Bridge		Syedabad
12	Shanir Akhra-Shahbagh-Farmgate-Asadgate-Mohammadpur		Shanir Akhra
13	Motijheel-Shahbagh-New Market-Jigatola-Shangkar-Mohammedpur		Motijheel
14	Signboard -Motijheel-Shahbagh-New Market-Shyamoli-Mirpur 1, 12Signboard (Chittagong Road)		
15	Chittagong Road-Motijheel-Shahbagh-Farmgate-Mirpur 12		Chittagong Road
24	Gulistan-Maghbazar-Mohakhali-Airport-Uttara-Bipile		Gulistan

CITY BUS ROUTE