

Anudip Motors-Kalyan Samity row over taxicab

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Mahanagar Taxicab Malik Kalyan Samity (MTMKS) and Anudip Motors Limited blamed each other for violating the terms and conditions signed during handing over of taxicabs.

The MTMKS says that the Anudip Motors supplied low quality taxicab, which causes a financial loss to them. On the other hand Anudip Motors said that some persons who failed to pay their monthly installment for the last five to six months are now bringing allegation against us just to put the company in trouble.

"We have been deceived as we were supplied low quality taxicabs with higher than the market price," MTMKS General Secretary Mohammed Mozammel Hoque Bhuyian told the journalists at a press conference at the National Press Club yesterday.

Mechanical faults were detected in the taxicabs when they rolled on to the roads, he said adding that it causes further financial loss to us.

"During signing of the agreement, the Anudip Motors had assured us of supplying spare parts but we did not get any cooperation in this regard," the MTMKS general secretary said. Most of the taxicabs are now lying in the workshop due to lack of spare parts, he added.

Besides, "The Anudip Motors is charging price for spare parts of the taxicabs four times higher than the existing market price," he said.

When contacted Anudip Motors Limited General Manager (Business Promotion) Aminul Hasan denied the allegation of MTMKS brought against the company.

"If the maintenance of the taxicab is done properly and skilled driver is engaged then the question of mechanical faults can not arise at all," Aminul Hasan said.

"They (MTMKS) are bringing allegation against us as we told them to pay the monthly installment which remain unpaid for the last five to six month," Aminul Hasan added.

"We handed over the taxicab

with downpayment of Tk. 40000 and rest of the money was supposed to be paid on monthly installment," he said.

"Those who failed to pay their monthly installment for the last five to six months are now trying to tarnish image of the company bringing illogical allegation," he added.

He said if the owners face difficulties then we are ready to give them cent per cent support in this regard.

Reunion

The first reunion of ex-students of sociology department, Dhaka University, will be held at the TSC auditorium on April 2, says a press release.

The registration fee is Tk 400 per person and Tk 600 for couple.

Former students have been requested to contact the following persons by March 23 for registration:

Qamrul Ahsan Chowdhury, chairman of sociology department, (9663131, 9661900-59, Ext. 4500); Syed Rezaur Rahman, deputy director of TSC, (9661900-59, Ext. 4177, 0171-260540, 9668828); and Mizanur Rahman (011-87100).

Injecting drug users blamed for near-epidemic rise in HIV

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

With the number of injecting drug users (IDUs) more than doubling in 2002, Bangladesh is now just one percent short of becoming a country with HIV epidemic among IDUs, says a study of National Aids Committee (Nac).

Government and non-government efforts are a must to cut the number of IDUs and prevent HIV/Aids, participants said at a seminar on 'Harm Reduction Approach in HIV Prevention Programme, Bangladesh' in the city yesterday.

The HIV prevalence rate in Bangladesh was put at 1.4 percent in the NAC second round surveillance report of 1999-2000 and 1.7 percent in the third report in 2000-01.

It shot up to four percent in 2002 while the global epidemic rate is five percent, said ASM Matiur Rahman, chairman of Nac technical committee, in his paper.

More than 50 percent IDUs in the central region of the country did not have access to interventions, which raised the prevalence rate to almost an epidemic, he pointed out.

"High prevalence of HIV in the neighbouring countries, increased population movement, lack of awareness of HIV infection, commercial sex, high prevalence of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), low use of condom and lack of voluntary blood donation are the risk factors," Matiur said.

Three hundred and sixty three IDUs were reported HIV infected till December 2003.

An inter-sectoral collaboration and instant initiatives are necessary to reduce and prevent the risk of HIV/Aids and 14 minis-

tries are engaged to prevent it, said Home Minister Altaf Hossain Choudhury in his speech as chief guest.

Pam Baatsen, country director of Family Health International, Md Abdus Selim, programme

manager of National Aids/STD programme, Anup Kumar Basu of HIV programme of Care, Bangladesh, and Md Asad, a former drug addict, also presented papers at the seminar organised by Care, Bangladesh, an NGO.

Kamaluddin Ahmed, director general of Department of Narcotics Control, Shahudul Hoque, inspector general of police, and Md Mizanur Rahman, DG of Health and Family Welfare, also spoke.



PHOTO: STAR

Employees of the Association of Development Agencies in Bangladesh (ADAB) observe a token hunger strike at the Central Shaheed Minar yesterday to press for their four-point demand.