

More private television channels to go on air

Although the move is underway, officials keep mum about the selection of the lucky few from the 30 applicants

AVIK SANWAR RAHMAN

The information ministry may allow a few more private satellite television channels to go on air in a bid to increase competition and professionalism in the electronic media.

Although the move is underway, officials keep mum about the selection of the lucky few from the 30 applicants. Sources allege only relatives of ruling BNP bigwigs will figure on the shortlist. Information Secretary Nazmul Alam Siddique declined to comment on the issue but said: "You will get to know when the channels are given permits."

But sources close to the electronic media named a series of organisations that applied for permission: Media One, Liberty Television,

Dhaka TeleFilm, Telebangla, Bishal Multimedia, KTV, Bengal News, Janata Television, Daffodil Multimedia, Bishal Music, Bijoy Broadcasting Univision, Bangla Television, Mixel Multimedia, Development Media TV Channel, SAS World, TV Bangla, Bangladesh Channel USA, Nationwide Communication, Bangla TV London, Probashi Television Network, National Television, Baishakhi Television, Sonali Television, Gazi Satellite Network and Movie Tone Media Communication.

An ex-vice-chancellor, a newspaper editor, industrialists and expatriates are among the applicants, some of them media analysts say have no strong economic background nor technical know-how.

"Launching a satellite television channel needs about Tk 60 crore,"

said a marketing manger of a satellite television.

A channel now on air allegedly went lobbying to block the permission for new channels, as it fears it will lose in the competition. "New channels may harm the media market unless it gets bigger," a media person said.

But media market critics say new channels will create more jobs, more competition and more exposure.

The permission for new satellite TV channels ran into red tape snags after the information ministry allowed seven channels such as Channel i, ATN Bangla, International Television (NTV), Inqilab Television (ITV), Universal Television (UTV), Jamuna Television (JTV) and Ekushey Television (ETV) to go on air.

Among them, only Channel i, ATN

Bangla and NTV are on air, but ITV, UTV and JTV have failed to broadcast programmes even a year after the permission and a Supreme Court verdict cancelled ETV's contract.

In the wake of the ETV scam, the information ministry worked on a set of regulations that will be signed into a law to control the electronic media.

"A parliamentary standing committee sent the draft bill back to the information ministry for more relaxed regulations compared to other countries," a ministry official said.

According to the bill, a private satellite channel will require licence - a rule that is not included in the current provision of permission.

Quest for ways to tame traffic for two decades



SVED ZAKIR HOSSAIN

SULTANA RAHMAN

Dhaka Transport Coordination Board (DTCB) is designing the city's traffic and transport system aiming to ease the ever-increasing traffic congestion for the next twenty years.

The system will also ensure a sustainable traffic flow and proper public transportation.

An extensive study of the plan undertaken by DTCB started last month. An American company Louias Perger in cooperation with Bangladesh Consultant Limited will conduct the study at cost of Tk 10 crore. The World Bank will provide funds for the 8-month survey in the city. The survey team will come up with a set of recommendations to solve the city's present problems and how to develop a comprehensive strategic plan to minimise traffic congestion in the next 20 years.

"The plan will be considered in three categories including short, mid and long term while implementation of the identified factors will get priority as per urgency, necessity and total improvement of the traffic system and public transportation," a DTCB official said.

DTCB sources said the comprehensive strategic plan has considered the factors of urbanisation, expansion of city's road network

and its sustainability, total population and growth rate, trend of increasing number of vehicles and mode of transportation and related factors within the next 20 years.

Officials in the DTCB said the comprehensive plan would include the expansion of alternative road networking that includes circular waterways around Dhaka, subways, rapid bus transits and elevated express ways.

"The comprehensive transport networking will minimise traffic congestion as it is opening various transport networks to city commuters. If we can provide better waterways round the city, many commuters will have an alternative way of reaching their destinations and it could be a probable solution of saving time commuting in the city," the DTCB official explained.

Aiming at the next 20 years the plan is giving priority to introduce mass transportation including more buses.

Executive director of DTCB Quamrul Islam Siddiqui told the Star City, "We would be able to minimise traffic congestion if we implement a comprehensive strategic plan to solve the traffic problem on the basis of the findings and recommendations of the survey."



AKM MOHSEN

Small fish, big price: Customers hesitate to bargain

Low supply turns fish dearer

CITY CORRESPONDENT

Fish crisis has gripped the city's kitchen markets with supplies going down everyday.

Supply to the wholesale markets fell around 200 tons a day from over 350 tons in the last 5-6 weeks.

"The catch of sweet water fish has declined to an alarming level", said Abul Miah, a trader at Karwan Bazar wholesale fish market.

"We used to get supply of different varieties of fish from districts outside Dhaka at this time of summer every year. But the supply is going down with price increasing everyday", he said.

Traders at other wholesale markets are experiencing similar crisis. Many makeshift shops at Swarighat, New Market, Jatrabari,

Karwarn Bazar and Rampura remain shut for lack of fish supply.

"What's the use of occupying a shop when supply is not enough to earn profit. How can we survive by counting loss everyday," said Moslem Ali of Rampura wholesale market.

Wholesalers rush to fish markets on the banks of Padma, Meghna and Dhaleswari but often return empty-handed.

"You have to be there long before dawn. You will get fish only if you are lucky, for all the catches get sold within an hour or so," said Moslem.

In the kitchen markets supply of fresh fish has become rare. Frozen fish sell at double their prices.

A one-kilogram sized frozen *ruhi* sells at Tk. 120-130 and bigger ones range between Tk 160 and Tk.

200 a kilogram. *Katla* or *mrigel* also sell at almost similar rates. Cat fish sells at Tk 350-400 a kilogram and prawn between Tk 180 and Tk. 250.

"How can we afford to buy fish at this rate?" asked a consumer of middle-income group at Karwan Bazar.

Depletion of fish is mainly blamed on indiscriminate catch and use of toxic pesticides. Besides, water bodies in rural areas turned into farmlands or gets dried up during summer.

Carrying charges and extortion at different points have added to the situation.

To bring one truck of *ruhi-katla* imported from Myanmar to Dhaka now costs around Tk 70-80 thousand which was only Tk 40 thousand last year, said a fish importer.

useful telephone numbers

COURIER 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
Bangladesh Express Co. Ltd.- 9565114
Bangladesh Courier Service- 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, 9569759
Probashi Courier Services- 9346359
Rainbow Express Parcel Services Ltd.- 8322773, 8315703
Reliance Express Services- 9558515, 7110249
Sundarban Courier Services- 9551984, 9556189, 9551656
Sunrise Courier Services- 9568751
World Runner Express Ltd. 9112068, Fax - 880-2-9112068

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

LIBRARY & INFO-

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
Drik Photo Gallery- 9120125, 8112954, 8123412

OUTING

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, Wednesday closed
Ahsan Manzil
Open: 10 am 5 pm, Friday: 3 pm - 7 pm, Thursday Closed
Shishu Jadughar- 9666466
Open: 10 am- 6 pm, Sunday Closed

CITY BUS ROUTE

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-Gulshan 1, 2	Kamalapur
6 B	Kamalapur-Motijheel-Gulistan-Maghbazar-Nabisco-Gulshan 1, 2	Kamalapur
6 C	Motijheel Shapla chattr- Malibagh- Farmgate- Gulshan 2	Motijheel Shaplachattr
7	Sadarghat-Gulistan-Maghbazar-Nabisco-Gulshan 2	Sadarghat
8	Chittagong-Motijheel-Shahbagh-Farmgate-Asad Gate-Kalyanpur-Gabtoil	Chittagong Road
9	Demra Rani mahal-Motijheel-Kalbagan-Shyamoli-Mirpur 1, 10, 11, 12	Demra Ranimahat
10	Sadarghat-Gulistan-Kakrail-Malibagh-Rampura-Biswa 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-Jhigatola-Shangkar-Mohammedpur	Motijheel
14	Signboard - Motijheel-Shahbagh-New Market-Shyamoli-Mirpur 1, 12	Signboard (Chittagong Road)
15	Chittagong Road-Motijheel-Shahbagh-Farmgate-Mirpur 12	Chittagong Road
24	Gulistan-Maghbazar-Mohakhali-Airport-Uttara-Bipile	Gulistan