



The government's plan to operate 300 more CNG-driven buses with a view to improve the overall transport system has been deferred because of continuous failure to formulate definite guidelines.

BRTC loses out to donors' pressure

Purchase and operation rights of 300 CNG buses handed to private sector

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The government has given in to pressure from donor agencies on a plan to purchase and operate 300 CNG-driven buses under the Dhaka Clean Fuel Project (DCFP) and has handed over the responsibility to private companies recently.

It was speculated earlier that the Bangladesh Road Transport Corporation (BRTC) would handle the purchase and operation on its own but development partners were reportedly critical of the corporation's past record in similar ventures.

The DCFP was initiated with a view to improve the overall transport system in the city. Under this project, plans were made for purchasing 300 CNG-driven buses and 2,000 CNG-operated auto-rickshaws. In addition to those initiatives, 26 new CNG filling stations were to be set up, 23 of which would be inside the city.

Due to continuous failure in formulating a definite guideline, the government had to shift the purchase and operation plans of the 300 CNG-driven buses to 2005.

According to sources, the Communica-

tions Ministry could not prepare a guideline and also could not come to a decision about which department or organisation should be looking after the operation of these buses.

Initially, the Energy Ministry suggested that the Ministry of Communications should procure the buses through the Rupantarita Praktika Gas Company Ltd. (RPGCL). However, that idea was opposed by the Communications Ministry which felt that the buses could be bought and operated through the BRTC.

But the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and Norwegian Development Bank (NORAD), the two donor agencies for the project, did not want the BRTC's involvement apparently because of its alleged past record of corruption and incompetence.

The total cost of the project is around \$113 million, out of which \$90 million is being funded by the two donors with ADB's contribution standing at \$80 million. The government will provide \$23 million from internal resources.

The development partners had proposed the disbursement of the money through bank loans which was not agreed by the

Communications Ministry as that would have increased the total implementation cost of the project.

The ADB loan that comes with around 1.5 percent interest would be waived for the first ten years. Repayment of the loan, with interest, would begin after that period.

The installation of a 60-kilometre gas pipeline from Aminbazar of Savar to Dhanua, construction of two gas stations at Savar and Ashulia and a 97-kilometre pipeline in Dhaka has also been included in project.

"As the donors did not want us to be a part of the project they therefore have handed it over to private companies," said BRTC chairman Taimur Alam Khondoker.

"Due to the involvement of private companies in such an important project, the city would be suffering in the near future," he added.

"The approved funds for the project hopefully would be made available by November," said a senior official of the Communications Ministry. If that happens, the purchase of the buses and their eventual operation could be initiated from February next year, felt sources in the ministry.

Feasibility study on to build Moghbazar, Mouchak flyovers

CITY CORRESPONDENT

The government has initiated a feasibility study for constructing two more flyovers at Moghbazar and Mouchak, two of city's most traffic congested points.

Sources said the government has obtained a Technical Assistance grant from Kuwait Fund for Economic Development, which will cover the cost of feasibility study, detailed engineering design and preparation for tender documents of the two new flyovers.

Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) will implement the project with consultancy services from The Associated Engineering Partnership, Kuwait, STUP Consultants P. Ltd, India and Bangladesh Consultants Ltd (BCL).

The study and design of the project will cost US\$ 607,071 whereas the construction cost of the flyovers will be determined later by the LGED.

Meanwhile, the Mohakhali and Khilgaon flyovers are nearing completion and likely to be open for traffic very soon. Mohakhali flyover is scheduled to be opened on November 7 while Khilgaon flyover in December, LGED sources said.

"Flyovers are meant to divide fast and slow vehicular traffic

automatically," said Robert E. Rickman, team leader of the consultants for Moghbazar and Mouchak flyovers, explaining the importance of flyovers in a city with congested roads.

According to LGED's large bridge/culvert project director office, the pre-construction work for the flyovers has been divided into two phases.

Phase-I, which will take four and a half months, methodologically refers to the tasks required to complete the technical and economic feasibility study of the project and preliminary designs of the flyovers. Detailed engineering design and preparation for tender documents of the project in phase-II will take seven and a half months.

After the study, two final designs will be chosen from 12 alternatives for Moghbazar and Mouchak intersection flyovers. The Planning Commission will examine the designs and then submit them to foreign ministry for seeking foreign grants.

LGED officials hope the Kuwait Fund, which is funding the feasibility study, will also assist in the construction phase if they are satisfied with the design and study.

According to the project director's office, the costliest of the 12 alternative designs will involve about Tk 400 crore and the cheap-

est will cost about Tk 80 crore.

LGED officials said the flyovers would be designed through landscaping of the project sites. The landscaping will help avoid traffic congestion in the construction phase.

To improve the transport infrastructures and services in Dhaka metropolitan area and ease the prevailing chaotic traffic condition, the government undertook the Dhaka Urban Transport Project (DUTP) funded by multilateral donor agencies.

In the first phase of a feasibility study undertaken by DUTP, 20 locations have been prioritised for flyover construction or improving lanes with signalisation.

The project consultants say rapid growth of the population in Dhaka city resulted in a massive increase in vehicular traffic to meet the growing transport demand. The city experiences traffic congestion at almost every road intersections.

The congestion is mainly due to excessive number of motorised and non-motorised vehicular traffic that has far exceeded the capacity of the available road infrastructure facilities in the city. The new flyovers will solve the problems, the consultants hope.

DTCB plans new route to Azimpur

CITY CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka Transport Coordination Board (DTCB) is going to construct a road leading to Azimpur from the western side of Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) headquarters instead of its eastern side as had been planned earlier.

Sources in the DTCB said the idea of constructing a diversion road from Road 2 of Dhanmondi to Azimpur through the BDR campus came with a view to ease the severe traffic congestion on Road 2 and Science Laboratory crossing. It was also expected to reduce the travelling distance for those wishing to commute between Azimpur and Dhanmondi through the Sat Masjid Road.

The DTCB did a visual presentation at the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) on May 28, 2003 where it showed alignment of the proposed road next to the eastern wall of the BDR HQ. The PMO issued an order in June last year to the Rajuk, BDR and DTCB for studying the feasibility of the proposed road.

However DTCB officials said later that the proposed road seemed impractical as the multipurpose complex Rifles Square was situated right on the planned route.

"It was not built when we prepared the initial proposal," said a high official of the DTCB. "That is why we had thought of constructing the road beside the eastern wall of BDR where Rifles Square has its parking

space now," he added.

The official said the main problem was to find a suitable site near Road 2 of Dhanmondi for making an entry point to the proposed road. An alternate plan was also considered which would have seen an entrance way through Road 1.

"But problem arose there too as that would have required a 35-year-old two-storied private building to be demolished as it stood in the way. The owners were unwilling to do that," the official added.

Some establishments along the pond inside the BDR compound also had to be destroyed if the road had been constructed on the eastern side.

Following lengthy discussions with the BDR, the DTCB decided to reconstruct an existing road next to the western wall of BDR that connects Jigatola, Hazaribagh and Lalbagh with Azimpur. That road is about 30 feet wide but has potholes in many places. Also, some parts of it has been encroached by people.

"We will reconstruct the entire road very soon," the official said adding that people living in Mohammedpur, Katsur, Rayerbazar and western parts of Jigatola will be benefited most from it. He also expected the road to reduce traffic jam in the area.

Severe traffic chaos still exists at Science Laboratory crossing even though a large part of Mirpur Road has been made off-limit to non motor-

ised vehicles (NMV). Sat Masjid Road, that runs parallel to Mirpur Road suffers from traffic congestion as NMVs

move there along with motorised ones. Besides, presence of different establishments like hospitals, clinics, universities,

schools and business houses along the Sat Masjid Road have increased traffic movement in the area.



The plan to construct a diversion road from Dhanmondi Road No 2 to Azimpur through the eastern side of Bangladesh Rifles headquarters has now been changed to the western side.

useful telephone numbers

COURIER SERVICES

International

Air Borne Express- 9561371, 9561372, 9550724
Air Couriers Intl (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 Intl Courier- 9563636
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-

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 between 4pm and 10pm

LIBRARY & INFO-

Libraries, Cultural and Information Centers

Central Public Library- 8626001-4,
Shishu Academy- 9564128
Shilpakala Academy- 8614673
Bangla Academy- 8619550
Islamic Foundation- 9550280, 955640
The American Centre (IRC)- 8813440-4, 9886395
The 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

1 Gulistan-Shahbagh-Banglamotor-Farmgate-Mirpur 10, 11, 12
2 Gulistan-Shahbagh-Banglamotor-Farmgate-Mirpur 1, 2
3 Gulistan-Shahbagh-Farmgate-Mahakhali-Airport-Azampur
4 Shyampur-Motijheel-Shahbagh-Farmgate-Airport-Tongi
5 Sayedabad-Kamalapur-Motijheel-Airport-Joydebpur-Gazipur
6 A Kamalapur-Motijheel-Gulistan-Shahbagh-Farmgate-Gulshan 1, 2
6 B Kamalapur-Motijheel-Gulistan-Maghbazar-Nabisco-Gulshan 1, 2
6 C Motijheel Shapla chattr- Malibagh- Farmgate- Gulshan 2
7 Sadarghat-Gulistan-Maghbazar-Nabisco-Gulshan 2
8 Chittagong-Motijheel-Shahbagh-Farmgate-Asad Gate-Kalyanpur-Gabtolli
9 Demra Rani mahal-Motijheel-Kalbagan-Shyamoli-Mirpur 1, 10, 11, 12
10 Sadarghat-Gulistan-Kakrail-Malibagh-Rampura-Biswa Road-Tongi Bridge
11 Sayedabad-Motijheel-Fakirapool-Maghbazar-Mohakhali-Tongi Bridge
11/A Sayedabad-Khilgaon-Malibagh-Rampura-Airport-Tongi Bridge
12 Shanir Akhra-Shahbagh-Farmgate-Asadgate-Mohammadpur
13 Motijheel-Shahbagh-New Market-Jhigatola-Shangkar-Mohammadpur
14 Signboard -Motijheel-Shahbagh-New Market-Shyamoli-Mirpur 1, 12
15 Chittagong Road-Motijheel-Shahbagh-Farmgate-Mirpur 12
24 Gulistan-Maghbazar-Mohakhali-Airport-Uttara-Bipile

Starts from

Golap Shah Mazar
Phoolbaria bus station
Phoolbaria bus station
Shyampur
Sayedabad
Kamalapur
Kamalapur
Motijheel Shaplachattr
Sadarghat
Chittagong Road
Demra Ranimahat
Sadarghat
Sayedabad
Shanir Akhra
Motijheel
Signboard (Chittagong Road)
Chittagong Road
Gulistan