



A fuel dealer in a Chandkarpool shop... the question lies whether it has authority to transact business.

Unauthorised petrol pumps sell substandard fuel

AKBAR HOSSAIN

In violation of the government rule, several hundred unauthorised fuel shops across the city continue selling substandard fuel much to the disregard for the environment.

According to country's explosive law, a person must obtain permission from the Department of Explosives to sell above 1000 litres of fuel. Besides, one can sell fuel under a trade license.

A trade license allows only limited sale. But many fuel traders sell petrol and diesel exceeding the amount they are originally

permitted under trade license.

Mostly the government transports and two-stroke private vehicles attracted by lower price buy petroleum from these unauthorised fuel shops. Traders without official permission sell petrol at Tk 28-30 a litre while authorised petrol pumps at Tk 33 a litre.

Some petroleum traders to profit high add kerosene and other substances to petrol and diesel.

Against the backdrop of such practices, the government last year fixed the colours of kerosene, diesel, petrol and octane to prevent environmental degradation

and to protect consumers' rights.

"Petrol, diesel and octane when mixed with kerosene and other substances cause vehicles to billow black smoke. They also shorten vehicle longevity," said an explosive department official.

Sources in the explosive department said currently there are around 220 filling stations against 500 unauthorised petroleum shops in the city. Most of these fuel shops are located near the bus terminals and stands like Sayedabad, Mohakhali, Gabtoli, Kalyanpur, Karwan Bazar, Mirpur-1, Mirpur-10 and Dholaikhal area.

"For the last five years I have

been running my business without any serious difficulty. Sometimes when police create problem I bribe them into keeping mum," said a fuel trader of Mirpur-1 requesting anonymity.

He said he maintains a stock of over 2000 litre petrol and diesel to meet the increased demand.

Nurul Alam, chief inspector of explosives department, said, "Sometimes we carry out drives against illegal petroleum shops but those (drive) are not enough to check the practice."

He, however, could not give the exact number of unlicensed petroleum shops in the city.

Women dominate drug business in Mohammadpur

KAUSAR ISLAM AYON

Women and teenagers are dominating the clandestine drug business in the city's Mohammadpur residential area.

The statistics of arrests made by Mohammadpur police over the last one year reveal that more than 50 percent of the drug sellers were women.

"We arrested more than a hundred drug sellers in the last six months, half of them were women. When they get bail, they return to the same business," said a duty officer of Mohammadpur Police Station.

He said nearly one-third of the drug sellers are teenagers who are also victims of drugs.

Most drug sellers live in the slums of the

sweeper colony and Geneva Camp, locals alleged. The men are engaged in collection and supply of drugs and maintaining liaison with local gangsters to run the business smoothly.

Some of the women came to this trade to earn a living and some were compelled by their addict husband, father or brother or the gangsters.

"My father brought me in this business and after my marriage I continued as my husband is also doing the same job," said Asma, 25, who is involved in drug business for the last nine years.

Fulbanu, Haseda, Afroza, Noor Aktari, Alekzan, Pori Banu, Rahela, Razia, Sahida

Begum, Shabana Begum are the few names who were arrested by the police in Mohammadpur in the last three months. Most of them have come out of custody and resumed the business.

The police sources admitted that whenever they raid the areas they can arrest only the sellers, not the dealers and suppliers.

Mohammadpur Sweeper Colony, Town Hall market and Geneva Camp have become dens of drug traders who dare to sell drugs openly in the marketplace. Hundreds of addicts gather here to buy drug every day.

Noorjahan Begum (not her real name) sells 80gm to 90gm heroin a day. "Our customers are mostly teenagers who comes from different parts of the city. They mainly take Phensidyl and heroin," she said.

Most of the sellers let their customers use their rooms at the slums. "This spot is popular because we provide safe place for the addicts, especially those who prefer heroin," said Noorjahan.

Fourteen-year-old Tani sells heroin in front of the sweeper colony. She said her mother is also involved in this business and father is an addict.

"My mother asked me to sell Puria when I was reading in class six. My father takes my earnings for using drug," said Tani.

At the Mohammadpur kitchen market, drugs are available like any essential item. Dipankor, a regular customer of drugs, said he comes to Mohammadpur for safety reason. "Police seldom raid this place."

The locals are irritated with this drug business. "The addicts are disturbing our normal life as they roam around the area," said Zafar Ahmed, a local resident. "They are also involved in theft."

Mohammadpur police however said they regularly raid the area and arrest suspected criminals and drug traders.



Geneva camp in Mohammadpur is notably flourishing in the drug business with women playing a major role.

Air quality station starts reporting

MANISHA GANGOPADHYAY

The new Rajarbag mobile air quality monitoring station set up in late October has already started delivering reports and the findings are unsettling.

According to November's report the highest presence of PM10 the largest respirable suspended particulate matter, over a 24-hour period was recorded on November 2 and it stood at 192 micrograms per cubic meter, which is significantly higher than current Air Quality standards set at 150 µg/m

The actual high may be greater as reports are produced only once a week and half of these have been marked invalid in the past because of power outages at the station.

Air quality in the city is at its worst in winter when precipitation is at its lowest. Among the pollutants PM10 is especially high. Also known as 'black carbon smoke', exposure of PM10 can lead to respiratory morbidity, impaired lung function and cancer. Its primary source is emissions from diesel-run vehicles.

Reports from the environmental organisation The Clean Air Initiative confirm that the main air quality-related problem in Dhaka is particulate matter (PM10 and PM2.5). In this category, the main polluters are believed to be commercial and private vehicles.

Measuring ambient air quality in the city is thus only half of the two-part plan of the Air Quality



Stations to maintain air quality have been set up recently to control emissions that pollute the environment.

Management Project under the Department of Environment, funded by the World Bank and the Government of Bangladesh. The second part involves creating and enforcing revised vehicle emissions standards.

Unlike vehicle emissions standards, ambient air quality cannot be enforced. The data from the stations will instead be used to inform policy measures concerning air pollution and to generate awareness.

The station built at the Rajarbag police line is the first among four mobile air quality monitoring stations that will be established throughout the city and its surrounding areas. It is the first station to produce reports after the only permanent air quality station was built at the National Parliament compound in April 2002.

The second new station was established at BITAC in Tejgaon late last month and two are yet to be completed at Tongi Industrial Area and Narayanganj. All are expected to be up and running in January.

All four of the new stations are mobile or satellite stations and therefore are capable of shifting locations. According to S.M. Abdul Quadir, Project Director of AQMP, the satellite stations are more economically viable than the permanent monitoring stations, which can cost up to Tk two crore when all factors are taken into consideration.

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 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 Center (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	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-Magbazar-Nabisco-Gulshan 1, 2	Kamalapur
6 C	Motijheel Shapla chattr- Malibagh- Farmgate- Gulshan 2	Motijheel Shaplachattr
7	Sadarghat-Gulistan-Magbazar-Nabisco-Gulshan 2	Sadarghat
8	Chittagong-Motijheel-Shahbagh-Farmgate-Asad Gate-Kalyanpur-Gabtoli	Chittagong Road
9	Demra Rani mahal-Motijheel-Kalbagan-Shyamoli-Mirpur 1, 10, 11, 12	Demra Ranimahar
10	Sadarghat-Gulistan-Kakrail-Malibagh-Rampura-Biswa Road-Tongi Bridge	Sadarghat
11	Sayedabad-Motijheel-Fakirapool-Magbazar-Mohakhali-Tongi Bridge	Sayedabad
11/A	Sayedabad-Khilgoan-Malibagh-Rampura-Airport-Tongi Bridge	Sayedabad
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-Magbazar-Mohakhali-Airport-Uttara-Bipile	Gulistan