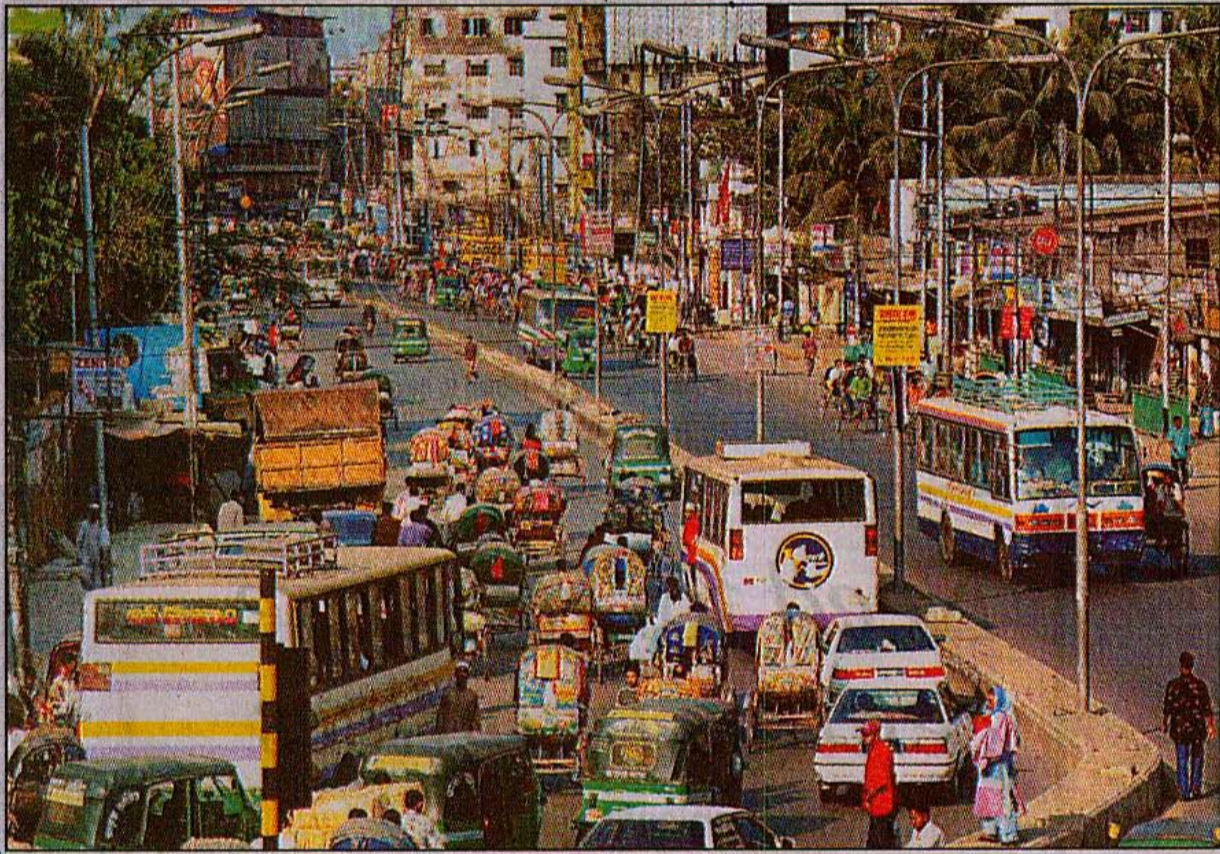


## Joint-line flyover suggested for Moghbazar-Mouchak



Moghbazar, one of the heavily congested intersections in the city, needs a flyover for smooth flow of traffic.

KAUSAR ISLAM AYON

A feasibility study on the proposed Moghbazar-Mouchak flyover suggested constructing a joint-line overpass covering both the intersections instead of two separate flyovers.

Following the study conducted last month, Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) may go for a joint-line flyover to ease traffic jam in the area, sources said.

"The distance between these two busy intersections is so little that the construction of two flyovers would create further congestion at their ending and starting points. So we have proposed for a single flyover," said an engineer of LGED.

The cost for constructing the joint-line flyover has been estimated at Tk 430 crore. Two individual flyovers would however cost Tk 100 crore less,

he added.

"We are preparing the final design with both the options," he said adding, "Everything depends on the decision of the financier."

Sources said the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED) or Islamic Development Bank (IDB) or both would finance the flyover.

"The prospective financiers will send teams to Bangladesh at the end of next month and then the funding and design will be finalised," the LGED engineer said.

Moghbazar and Mouchak are two most jam-prone areas in the city. Long tailbacks are seen every day from Mouchak and Moghbazar.

Moreover, the traffic situation in the areas may become more chaotic after the opening of Khilgaon flyover, as fast movement of vehicles over the flyover would increase the traffic pressure on the roads towards Mouchak and

Moghbazar.

On completion of the feasibility study costing Tk 3.43 crore, the LGED has sent the primary design of the flyover to Kuwait. It took about one year to complete the study although the Kuwait fund gave three months time for it.

According to the study, the length of the flyover would be around two kilometres, stretching from Mouchak to Eskaton Road. Another joint section of the flyover would go up to Moghbazar rail gate from Moghbazar crossing.

Officials hope the construction work will begin by mid-2005.

The LGED has planned to construct two more flyovers -- one at New Market-Science Laboratory and the other at Dholaikhal-English Road. Construction of these flyovers remains uncertain as the government is still looking for financier.

## BRTC's luxury offer?

SABRINA KARIM MURSHED

Despite huge losses the Bangladesh Road Transport Corporation (BRTC) is providing free bus service from Russel Square to Azimpur for ten days beginning Saturday.

The BRTC's move came in the wake

feel that the BRTC is trying to create a false sense of comfort with the 10-day offer as the corporation had not prepared a plan to deal with the situation once rickshaws went off that road. Also, it has not said anything about what will happen once the free-ride period ended.

BRTC faced a net loss of Tk 312.27 million in the year 2003-2004. Tk 31.65 million of the amount was in depreciation while Tk 154.2 million was in interests it had to pay the banks against loans.

The chairman said the organisation is still confronting losses as it has to bear the age-old loan interests and also the depreciation. "Had it been the operative surplus only, then there would not be any losses for the BRTC," said Khandaker.

As part of the free-service initiative, 20 buses from BRTC's Kalyanpur depot, 10 from Joarsahara and 10 from Motijheel depot have been deployed to travel between Gabtoli to Azimpur.

The commuters in general have appreciated BRTC's free bus service but some have found it irregular.

"I was standing in front of the Teachers' Training College for at least half an hour before a BRTC bus arrived," said Lima Raihani, a housewife waiting at a bus stop.

BRTC officials said that they have not yet received any such complaints from commuters or from the DTCEB. However, an official of the BRTC said delays might happen if buses get stuck in traffic jams.

"There should be enough buses on the route as one is starting every five minutes," he said.

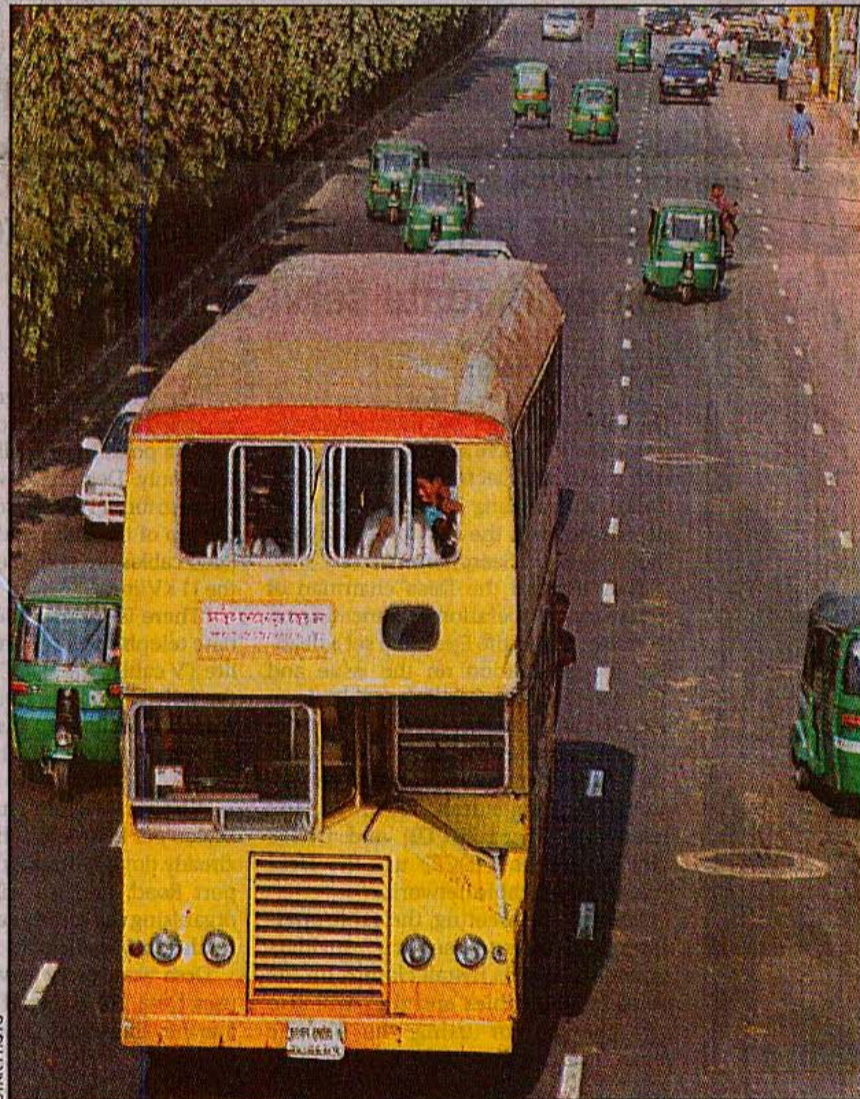
Commuters have expressed mixed views about the initiative. Many feel that the BRTC is trying to create a false sense of comfort with the 10-day offer as the corporation had not prepared a plan to deal with the situation once rickshaws were taken off the road

of a ban on non-motorised vehicles on that stretch of the Mirpur Road. 40 BRTC buses now ply on the route and carry passengers free of cost after the BRTC and the Dhaka Transport Coordination Board (DTCEB) took the step in an apparent bid to ease the commuters into accepting the change.

But commuters have expressed mixed views about the initiative. Many

BRTC chairman Taimur Alam Khandaker ruled out any extension to the free service after ten days while admitting the offer would only add to the losses suffered by the corporation.

"BRTC is a public service oriented organisation and we always try to offer better service for the people despite financial losses on our part," said Khandaker.



STAR PHOTO

## Plan to open coaching centres in govt schools, colleges



SULTANA RAHMAN

The education ministry has decided to introduce in-house coaching centres in every public schools and colleges from the next year to help the students overcome their weaknesses and improve quality of education.

The decision came against the backdrop of the rapid growth of coaching centres across the country, especially in Dhaka City. Many students have become dependent on these expensive but low-quality coaching centres.

"The student counselling committees of the schools and colleges will identify the students who are weak in a particular subject, and then they will get coaching from their own institutions," said Ehsanul Haque Milon, state minister for education.

"Once we introduce this new system, students would no longer need to go for coaching outside their institutions," Milon added.

Running coaching centres outside schools and colleges have become a business but they do not maintain quality, the state minister observed. The government has no control over these private coaching centres.

The centres offer coaching on every subject from class three to higher secondary level. Even the students of renowned schools and colleges have to go to these centres for preparing themselves for examinations.

"We make the students competent and help them improve their preparation for better result," said Mehedi Hasan, teacher and owner of a coaching centre on Mirpur Road. He teaches some 50

students, each of them pays Tk 2,000 a month.

"My students are from 'O' and 'A' level. I help them understand their subjects better," Mehedi said.

Many students alleged the teachers often force them to go to coaching centres of their choice as they earn money from these centres. Some teachers do not take proper care of their students at schools due to their involvement in coaching business.

"I would not have sent my son to coaching centre if the teachers taught the students in classroom with care," said Hamidul Haque, father of a class eight student.

On the other hand, many teachers said the parents often asked them to arrange coaching for their inattentive children.

"I try to make the class

tasks understandable to all my students. Those who are weak in my subject, I ask them to come to me for making the tasks understandable," said Shamim Ahmed, a teacher of Dhaka College.

"This sort of problem arises as the number of students in a class is very high. It is not possible to solve the problems of all students within the limited class time," he said.

Many students alleged that most teachers do not think about the students' individual level of understanding and eventually they are forced to go to their designated private coaching centres for 'better understanding.'

Moreover, it is alleged that some teachers make the classroom teaching difficult for the students who are not their 'private students.'

"My English teacher at

school insults me even for a silly matter. If she finds a negligible mistake she punishes me. But she does not punish those who study at her coaching centre," said Oindrila, class-five student of a renowned school.

Oindrila's mother said some parents advised her to admit Oindrila to a coaching centre in Dhanmondi. "After receiving repeated complaints from my daughter, I personally talked to the teacher and she also asked me to take her to that centre."

The students and parents said most of the teachers of renowned schools and colleges are teaching at coaching centres to earn more money.

The coaching centres have their own courses and method of teaching. There is no quality control of teaching in these centres.

### city express

The latest crop of quotes from the city's press -- words worth repeating, we feel, for their humour, insight or sheer outrageousness. Star City does not necessarily support the opinions expressed in this column.



"Give us more aid, we will listen more"

-- M Saifur Rahman

Finance and Planning Minister. Told a meeting with a delegation of donor groups of Britain and Japan on December 13. Source: The Daily Star

"If the Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) want mass support it has to kill the godfathers first."

-- Sheikh Hasina

Leader of the Opposition and Awami League President. Told a gathering at her office on December 14 where members of martyred intellectuals' families met her. Source: Prothom Alo

"They (the West) push democracy in our lands because they know we do not understand it. Democracy is a very good system if you know how to work it. However, we have seen that it has weakened a number of our Muslim nations by splitting the polity."



-- Mahathir Mohamad

Former Malaysian prime minister. Told at a breakfast meeting organised by the Bangladesh Enterprise Institute (BEI) on "Islam and the West" in the city on December 18. Source: The Daily Star

"In future we will vote for those who will ban religion based politics."

-- Colonel (Retd) Kazi Nuruzzaman Bir Uttam

Commander of Sector No 7 in the Liberation War. Told at a reunion of freedom fighters, who fought under sector No 2 in 1971, at Nagar Bhaban on December 16. Source: Bhorir Kagoj



"Jatiya Party's guardian is back. There should be no problems now"

-- H M Ershad

President, Jatiya Party. Told journalists on arrival at Zia International Airport after a 12-day visit to Saudi Arabia, commenting on the internal conflict on December 16. Source: Prothom Alo