

# Unity helps them thrive day in and day out

But passengers helpless and irritated as hawkers reign city buses

**IMRUL HASAN**

For Salma, it is the question of survival - but for bus passengers who are compelled to buy candies from the nine-year-old girl, it is irritating.

The way Salma sells candies in running buses is unique. She boards a bus and distributes two lozenges among each passenger. Then she requests them to buy the candies telling a sad story of poverty. She often touches the hands of the passengers, many of whom become annoyed but are compelled to buy candies from her.

Like Salma, hundreds of hawkers sell lozenges, ice cream, herbal medicine, tooth powder, peanut, fruits and books to the passengers of city buses. Bus conductors and

helpers seldom prevent them from doing their business in running buses.

Beggars also annoy passengers whenever the buses stop at a place. They either board the buses or put their hands through window.

"I feel uneasy while going to Farmgate from Gulistan every day because beggars and hawkers disturb the passengers and insist on buying their items," said Sonia Haider, an employee of a private company at Farmgate.

Nurul Islam, a student of Tejgaon College, said sometimes passengers ask them to get down but they keep on trying to sell their items.

Passengers alleged that the bus staff are responsible for this practice. But drivers, conductors and helpers say they are

helpless and cannot bar them from doing it.

"These hawkers are united, that is why we cannot stop this practice. If we try to stop their business, they will attack us," said Moti Mia, a bus conductor. "They have formed an association to run their business without any hindrance."

Rabiul Alam, a hawker who sells "Sripurer bori", a herbal medicine, and tooth powder in the running buses, said, "Drivers or conductors cannot stop our business. If any one says anything to us, we take strong action against him."

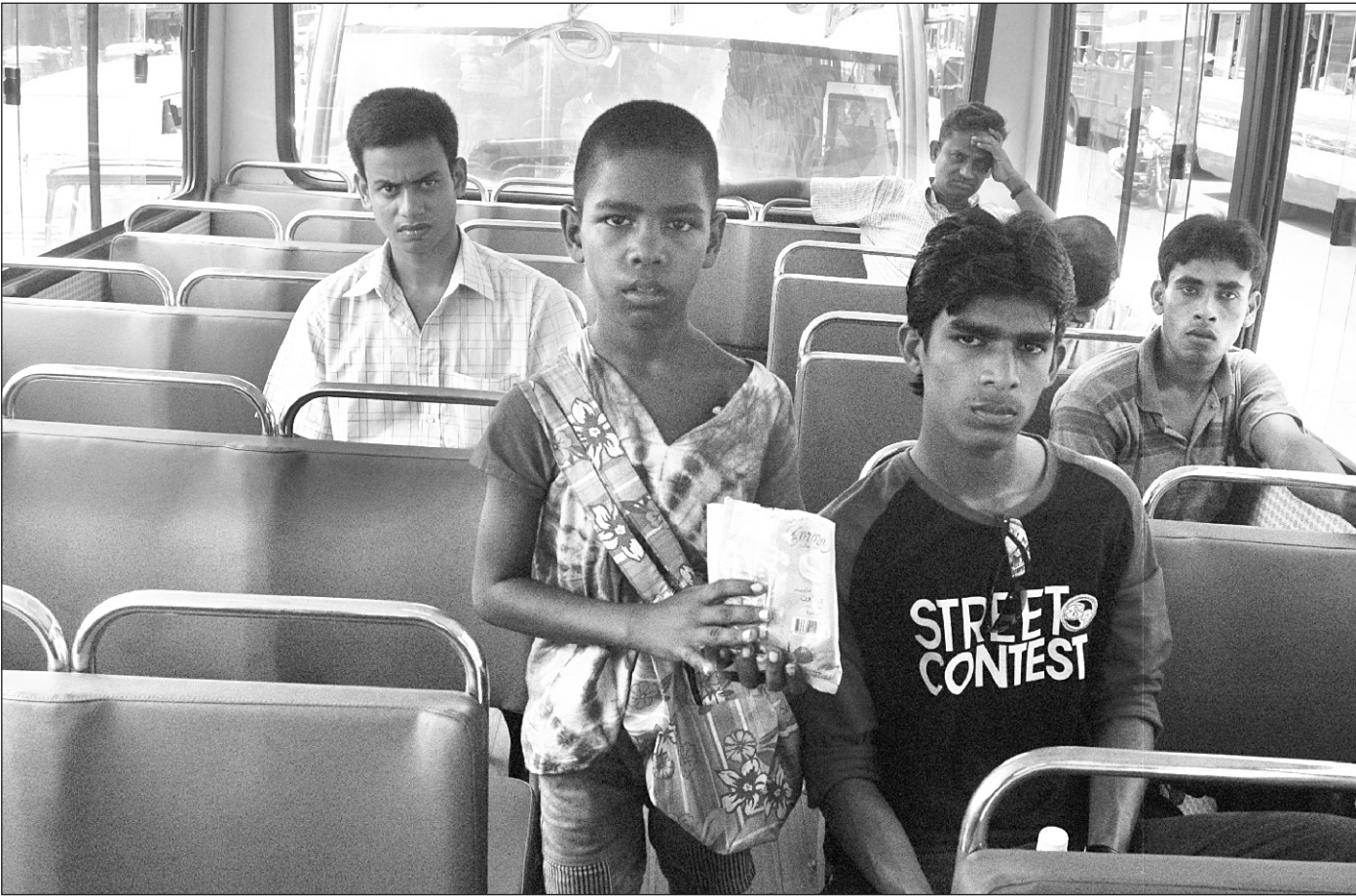
A driver said sometimes the hawkers drag bus drivers and conductors to their office and beat them up. "Even they threaten to kill us," he said.

Sources said the hawkers' association has nearly seven

lakh members, several hundred of them run their business in buses. "They are very strong in number. No one can tell them anything about disturbing the bus passengers," said a bus helper.

"We are poor people. We have to survive selling books or other items. So they [bus conductors and helpers] must give us chance to sell our items," said Md Kabir Uddin who has been selling books for the last 10 years.

"We are not stealing anything or mugging passengers. This is our business. We have rights to do this," said Tahidur Rahman, a peanut seller. "Sometimes police harass us, but we manage them giving bribes," he said.



Hawkers sell books, chocolates, pickles and ice cream in double-deckers. This little boy sells lozenges-- his daily task.

## DMCH's neurosurgery department lacks doctors



Patients wait impatiently in the department to receive treatment.

**KAUSAR ISLAM AYON**

The emergency operation theatre of the neurosurgery department at Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) has failed to provide proper service for the last 14 months.

For this reason, emergency surgeries have been seriously hampered and patients reportedly have died even after failing to get the required treatment.

In one recent incident, a 14-year-old named Ariful Islam died on June 11. His family sources said they had rushed the teenager to the hospital at around 7pm on that day after he had suffered a head injury.

The on-duty doctors decided on an emergency operation but said they could not take him to the operation theatre until 12pm the next day.

"Although the duty doctors told us that my son needed an emergency operation, they could not manage to do so before another 17 hours. My son died without any treatment," said Ariful's father Saidur Rahman.

"We are ready for an operation at any time but we do not have a permanent anesthetist for this department. That is why we often can not have the surgery on time," said Professor Dr. Shafiqe Uddin Ahamed.

DMCH sources said that on the holidays, only one anesthetist is available for three departments -- gynecology, casualty and neurosurgery.

"If an operation is taking place in any one of these departments, then the two other departments cannot go for a surgery as the anesthetist, who is most important for any operation, is not available" said

Ahamed.

The neurosurgery department at DMCH, where around a 100 patients arrive every day for treatment, has no indoor medical officer (IMO). No IMO has been

The patients properly due to the lack of IMOs.

"Everyday 30 to 35 patients get admitted and we have to provide emergency service to 70 to 80 people. The interns, nurses and ward boys are doing jobs which are supposed to be the responsibility of specialists," said a doctor.

There are 60 IMOs under the director of the DMCH director and he can attach them to different departments according to the need. But insiders DMCH said IMOs are reluctant to work with complicated cases of the neurosurgery department.

"Although the IMOs are under the director, they however manage to change their department by taking special permissions from the ministry of health or from the Director General's (DG) office," said an official of DMCH. "Most number of IMOs can be found in departments like casualty, gynecology and medicine as the income is higher there compared to the neurosurgery department."

"It is alarming that an important and sensitive department like neurosurgery is being completely run by internee doctors. It is putting the lives of patients at risk and also tarnishing the reputation of the hospital. But for some mysterious reason, the department is still without any indoor medical officer," said an official of DMCH. He added that even the assistant registrar of the department was a student of the medical college.

"We are providing smooth and efficient service to the patients even without the IMOs. I admit that the service would have been better if we had some IMOs attached to the department," said Professor ShafiqeUddinAhamed.

## useful telephonenumber

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**International**

Air Borne Express- 9561371, 9561372, 9550724

Air Couriers Int'l (BD) Ltd.- 8815970

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Baishakhi Courier Service- 9558606

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Bangladesh Int'l Courier- 953636

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Dreamland Courier Service- 9550326, 9566975

Pioneer Courier Services- 9561727, 9569759

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World Runner Express Ltd. 9112068, Fax - 880-2-9112068

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Do you know according to Dhaka City Corporation, you must deposit your waste at the collection site between 4pm

**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-** 8850141, 8850142

**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 chattar- Malibagh- Farmgate- Gulshan 2	Motijheel Shaplachattar
7	Sadarghat-Gulistan-Maghbazar-Nabisco-Gulshan 2	Sadarghat
8	Chittagong-Motijheel-Shahbagh-Farmgate-Asad Gate-Kalyanpur-Gabtol	Chittagong Road
9	Demra Rani mahal-Motijheel-Kalbagan-Shyamoli-Mirpur 1, 10, 11, 12	Demra Ranimahal
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