

# Traffic Radio Channel still useless

DMP, Betar blame each other for non-cooperation

CITY CORRESPONDENT

The recently launched Traffic Radio Channel of Bangladesh Betar is not transmitting updated information on traffic congestion and accidents in the city, officials at the Traffic Division of Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) alleged.

"We have assigned three of our staff to provide the channel with updated information, but they [Betar] are not transmitting the

facts on time," alleged Ansar Uddin Khan Pathan, DC traffic (South) of DMP.

He claimed that the DMP Traffic Division is sending updated traffic information to the channel in every ten minutes. But the Betar officials blamed the DMP for non-cooperation in smooth running of the channel.

The objective of the channel launched on May 26 is to make the drivers aware of traffic rules and notify them of points of traffic

jam and accidents.

The channel starts transmission in 103 megahertz (MHZ) of FM band at 7:30am and ends at 11:30am. Another four-hour shift starts at 3:30pm.

A hotline telephone has been installed to send information from the control room at Shahbagh to Bangladesh Betar. But Betar sources claimed they need some more equipment for smooth transmission from the channel.

The Betar officials said they

need digital audio control for mixing sound, CD recorders, microphones and a dedicated studio to transmitter link (STL).

The Traffic Division officials said they have already sent a letter to the director general (DG) of Bangladesh Betar stating that the channel is not transmitting updated information provided by the control room.

Betar sources complained of lack of cooperation from the traffic police. They said two traffic sergeants or inspectors are supposed to come to the Bangladesh Betar station to work for the channel. A radio control room has been set up for the two police personnel, but no one come from the DMP.

DG of Bangladesh Betar Nazmul Ahsan said the channel has started operating despite some limitations and lack of logistic support. "For example, we transmitted information about August 9 waterlogging in the city to inform drivers of waterlogged areas. It definitely helped the commuters," he said.

"We are trying to run the programme as effectively as possible," Nazmul claimed, adding that the channel was launched without necessary logistic support.

A small number of drivers and commuters know that a traffic radio channel has been launched. Due to lack of advertisement it is still unknown to most people.

A taxi driver who listened to the channel on a few occasions said both the presentation style and time of the programme should be changed. He complained that the channel transmits traffic rules from outdated books.



Bangladesh Betar office at Shahbagh where a control room has been set up for the radio traffic channel.

# No move to evict illegal bus terminal from Fulbaria Road

SYED TASHFIN CHOWDHURY

There is no move to evict the illegal bus terminal behind the Nagar Bhaban that causes sufferings to commuters and businessmen in Fulbaria area.

The entire Fulbaria Road, stretching from Bangabazar Hawkers' Market to Gulistan, is used for parking buses of various routes.

"Rickshaws and private cars cannot pass through this road due to the buses parked on both sides of the road," said a resident in the area.

"We cannot walk on the footpaths along the road. These are also occupied by makeshift shops of motor parts, mechanics and tea-stalls," said Alamgir, who works at a shopping centre at Fulbaria.

The terminal remains busy from 5:00 in the morning until 1:00 or 2:00am. Several hundred buses and minibuses operating on various routes within and outside the city take passengers from this terminal.

Commuters coming from different parts of the city to work at Gulistan or Motijheel face problem during the rush hours -- 8:00am to 10:00am and from 4:00pm to 5:30pm-- due to heavy traffic congestion.

"Rickshawpullers and CNG drivers usually decline to go to Fulbaria Road due to traffic jam. They charge Tk 10 to 15 in extra fare," said Mashiur Khalid, who uses the road to go to his workplace in Motijheel.

The businessmen of the three shopping centres in the area are also facing tremendous problems due to the illegal bus terminal.

"We often cannot transport our supplies through the road that always remains blocked," said a businessman, who owns a shoe shop at City Plaza, one of the three markets adjacent to Fulbaria Road.

Businessmen from two other markets expressed similar views and demanded eviction of the illegal bus terminal.

"The parked buses and the crowds of drivers, conductors and spare-parts dealers discourage customers to come to this market," said Zahir, a salesman working



Dozens of minibuses parked in the illegal bus terminal on Fulbaria Road.

at a shop in Zakir Plaza market.

The businesses said they are incurring huge losses over the last few years due to the terminal. Despite this, the traders feel insecure to complain to the authorities concerned against the transport companies.

"The bus owners have political influence. What can we hope to do when DCC (Dhaka City Corporation) itself fails to solve this problem persisting for long right in its backyard," said a businessman.

Some of the bus owners and transport staff, however, feel that they are not doing anything wrong by operating buses from Fulbaria.

"We have been using this road as a terminal for over five years and the authorities concerned never objected to our activities," said Mohammad Sentu, director, Kaliganj Express, a bus operator.

An official at the bus terminal depart-

ment of DCC pointed out that the terminal is illegal. "DCC has not been able to overcome this problem as the terminal has become quite prominent over the past few years."

He said the terminal has been operating for years due to the indifference of the Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) to solve the problem.

But Ansar Uddin Khan Pathan, deputy commissioner Traffic (South), DMP, denied the allegation and said, "It is definitely the duty of DCC to look into the problems caused by illegal bus terminals."

"The mayor has assured that a plan has been made to evict a nearby slum on the land of Dhaka Wasa (Water and Sewerage Authority). This bus terminal will hopefully be shifted to that location," Pathan said.

He said the relocation of the terminal will hopefully take place by the end of this year.

10x4

10x4