

Drivers reluctant to use bus bays

IMRUL HASAN

Bus drivers who do not use the newly built bays on the road side, are causing traffic jam on the busy roads of the city thanks to the reluctance and irresponsible behaviour. They stop their vehicles to take passengers in the middle of the streets instead of the bays, making the flow of traffic slow.

Naturally, those waiting to board a bus don't have any choice but to wait on the streets instead of the footpaths risking their lives.

The bays were built as an extension of the roads beside a bus stop to ensure that buses exit and enter the city-streets from the stops to a separate lane.

"If the bus bays are used by the drivers regularly, the passengers would not be forced to wait here and there," said SM Mizanur Rahman, the commis-

sioner of Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) adding that several bus bays were constructed on the busy roads of Dhaka city to ease traffic jam.

"By using the bus bays, the drivers can also help improve the road safety and traffic management system," he said.

When asked why the on duty traffic police do not enforce their power, the police commissioner said: "Police department is very conscious about its role and responsibilities, but nothing will

improve if there is no public awareness."

According to DMP, on average 35 people are killed a year in road accidents.

Thousands of passengers commute by bus in Dhaka every day. Almost all the bus companies have set up their ticket counters at the bays.

Moreover, around 4500 buses and 8500 minibuses of both government and private companies run in the city on different routes.

Passengers waiting on the roadside scramble to get on these buses since they do not stop at the designated spots.

The commuters and the drivers blame each other for the inconvenience.

"Buses do not stop in front of their counters at the bay. So we are forced to wait on the main road," said Hasan Jafid, a Dhaka University student who was waiting for a bus at Shahbagh.

On the other hand, Md. Anis, a



A bus bay at Kakoli intersection in Banani remain empty while buses stop in the middle of the streets.

bus driver on route 8 said: "As the non-motorised vehicles, especially rickshaw pullers park their rickshaws in the bus bays, it is difficult for us to stop our buses there."

Roads and Highways

Department (RHD) constructed the bays in 2004-05 fiscal year under a Tk 20 crore project that

also included widening of roads, beautification and lighting.

RHD officials said it is the duty of traffic police to ensure that bus drivers use the bays for smooth flow of traffic.

"Both passengers and bus drivers must be made aware of the positive impacts of using bus

bays and it can effectively be done by the traffic department," a high official of RHD said.

But traffic department officials

said that there are flaws in the way these bays have been constructed, which is not encouraging the passengers and the drivers to use the bus bays.

A high official of the DC traffic (West) of DMP said: "If the main roads and bus bays are separated by dividers, it would be more convenient for the passengers and the bus drivers to use the bays."

Nam village facilities weigh over jute research institute

TAWFIQUE ALI

Parliament Secretariat and Public Works Department (PWD), ignoring the speaker's verbal instructions for postponement, remain rigid to take the land where the Bangladesh Jute Research Institute (BJRI) intends to set up laboratory and training centre for jute diversification.

While the BJRI plans to establish a biotechnology laboratory, training centre and dormitory, parliament secretariat wants to set up police barracks, parking, barbershop and departmental store to facilitate the residents of NAM Village on Manik Miah Avenue just beside the institute. The PWD's resource division

Implementation Project (SAIP) as required by the parliament secretariat.

Speakers' instruction for stall the move was verbal, said Habib, also manager of SAIP, but the residential sub-committee resolved that the NAM Village project would not be complete unless the said establishments are available to provide residents with amenities.

"I am not sure if the rules require land transfer in this case to follow the procedure of land acquisition," he said. "It is the Architecture Department that determines site and area of land for government establishments," he added.

"They will take over the land in the same arbitrary manner they took the 4.7 acres of the institute's land earlier for NAM flat project," said a BJRI top official seeking anonymity.

The institute has prepared the project proposal (PP) for setting up of a biotechnology laboratory, training centre and dormitory for jute diversification research work

at the said land exceeding one bigha.

The agriculture ministry forwarded the PP to the Architecture Department for approval of the construction plan," said the official adding that a biotech laboratory is an integral part of the institute and has to be on the same premises.

This site has been BJRI's home since its inception in 1952, but the Architecture Department raised an objection to the construction design submitted by BJRI, said Rawshan Habib.

Amenities for NAM residents will be developed in the second phase of the SAIP project, said its director Anwar Hossain.

Parliament secretariat simply took over BJRI's land on several occasions according to its requirements, said a mid-level officer of BJRI requesting anonymity.

"This time, they are disregarding a vital cause of jute research and diversification to ensure convenience of the NAM residents who include parliament members and other influential people," he said. "It is now up to the government to decide what has to be done," he added.

Dr. Md Kamal Uddin, president of BJRI's scientific officers' association, said that then institute wrote to the agriculture ministry to stop the move take over the land required for the establishment of the research

institute.

Following ministry's intervention, the speaker verbally asked the parliamentary standing committee to hold the move.

"The Jute institute's project for research and diversification is an approved scheme by the government itself," Kamal said.

"Far as I am aware, a floating work order and hiring a project consultant is underway," he said.

"Whether we realise it or not, environmentalists and the inter-

national community are eager to promote diversified uses of jute in today's context of environmental challenges across the globe," he added.

Kamal further said that they hoped the authorities concerned will refrain from the move to use the land for a purpose other than jute research, after the speaker's instructions.

Parliament secretariat's assistant secretary Mansur Ahmed Khan to the BJRI's director general (DG) on May 15 that they have already had the plans passed for construction of the said establishments.

The establishments will be set up on the land located to the west of Building no-6 and to the south of Building no-3 of the NAM Village.

Learning of the move to take its land much earlier, the BJRI authorities through agriculture ministry requested the PWD on April 18 to take such initiatives as per existing rules.

The PWD, as per rules, should send a proposal to the agriculture ministry and meet all the formalities of land transfer from BJRI. It is also required to compensate the BJRI for the land.

None of these requirements has been met in this case.

Earlier 4.7 acres of BJRI land was taken for six buildings of the NAM Village in which case too rules of government land transfer were not followed.

In the face of an audit objection, the Public Works Ministry paid the compensation for the land in June 2006, according to a top official of BJRI.

Expressing their disappointment, officials of BJRI said that they are helpless in a situation when land for research work for jute diversification is being taken for parking and barbershop.

Budget for biotechnology and other buildings are to be carried out under a project for jute production, diversification and the expansion programme.

BJRI's DG Dr Firoze Shah Shikder declined to comment saying: "The agriculture ministry is dealing with the matter."

healthouting, taxicab & train timing

HEALTH

Hospitals	Salimullah Medical College Hospital 7319002-6	The Eye Clinic 9333238
Anjuman-e-Mofidul Islam	9336611, 7411660	
BARDEM	8616641-50	
Cholera Hospital (ICDDR,B)	8811751-60	
CMH (Dhaka)	9870011	
Dhaka Medical Collage Hospital	8628612-6	
Holy Family Red Crescent	8311721-5	
Islamia Eye Hospital	9119315, 8112156	
Lion Eye Hospital	9129127	
Medinova Medical Services	8620353-4	
Mirpur General Hospital (Pvt) Ltd	9007873, 8015444	
Mitford Hospital	7319002-6	
National Heart Foundation Hospital	8014914, 8010491, 8021399	
Orthopedic Hospital	9112150	

Blood Bank

Red Crescent Centre- 9116563

Sandhani (DMCH)- 8624040

Sandhani (SMCH)- 7310061,

7310061, 7319022

Dhaka Medical Collage Hospital- 8626812-9

Akand Clinic 8015855, 8022581

Aroggaya Niketan 9333730

BAVS Maternity 8016413-4

Dhaka Monorog Clinic 9005050

Gulshan Mother & Child Clinic 8822738, 8812992

Ibn Sina Clinic 8119513

Jahana Clinic (Pvt) Ltd 8912929

Judi Maternity 9113322

Anzuman Mafidul Islam (Kakrail)

9336611, Gandaria 7319808,

7318166,

Al-Markajul Islam 9127867,

Shishu Bekash Clinic 9351625

Eye Bank

Sandhani International Eye Bank- 8614040

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Clinics

Subarna Express

Leaves Dhaka at 4:30 pm

Reaches Chittagong at 10:35 pm

Reliance Cab Ltd. 9339563-4

Leaves Dhaka at 7:30 am

Reaches Chittagong at 1:55 pm

RMS Cab Ltd. 8118536

Leaves Dhaka at 3:15 pm

Reaches Chittagong at 6:40 am

Shatarupa Taxi Cab Ltd. 731083,

01711-458740

Leaves Dhaka at 6:40 pm

Reaches Sylhet at 2:30 pm

Taxi Express

Leaves Dhaka at 9:45 pm

Reaches Sylhet at 6:40 pm

Tista Express

Leaves Dhaka at 7:00 am

Ambulances For Dead Body

Turna

Leaves Dhaka at 11:00 pm

Reaches Sylhet at 2:30 pm

Parabat Express

Leaves Dhaka at 12:45 pm

Reaches Sylhet at 9:20 pm

Joyantika Express

Leaves Dhaka at 9:45 pm

Reaches Sylhet at 6:40 pm

Upabon Express

Leaves Dhaka at 7:00 am

Reaches Sylhet at 4:00 pm

Ekata Express