

# Corrupt businessmen control transport sector

## Speakers tell CAB discussion

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A section of corrupt businessmen backed by political forces have taken the total control of the transport sector putting it under widespread mismanagement that causes public suffering and harassment, said the speakers at a discussion yesterday.

They said with links to administration they dominate the policy-making process to increase transport fare and other facilities in their favour, while the consumers have no scope to raise their voice.

As a result, the passengers are paying higher fares, but deprived of due services and subjected to harassment in many ways due to strong connivance among a section of politicians, businessmen and government officials, they added.

The discussion on 'Mismanagement in passenger service and our duty' was organised by the Consumers Association of Bangladesh (CAB) at the Cirdap auditorium.

"The situation in the transport sector is nothing but the reflection of criminalisation at national level," said The Hunger Project Country Director Dr Badiul Alam Majumder.

Every thing in this country is conducted in the interest of the rich and corrupt people, not for the commoners, he said, adding, this system cannot continue and therefore, a united movement should be waged.

Former secretary Mohiuddin Ahmed said some political leaders during the previous government undermined the services of Bangladesh Road Transport Corporation (BRTC) by providing special facilities to private sector for their own benefit.

"By bringing the bus and launch owners under strict control and devel-



Prof Alamgir Mujibul Haque speaks at a discussion at the Cirdap auditorium in the city yesterday. On his right are CPB President Manjurul Ahsan Khan, CAB President Borhan Ahmed and Barrister Turin Afroz.

oping the railway, discipline can be restored in public transport sector," he added.

Former executive director of Dhaka Transport Coordination Board (DTCB) Quamrul Islam Siddique said the DTCB couldn't work independently because of its dependency on the communications ministry and the city corporation.

"Rajuk (capital development authority) also has no transport planning," Quamrul said, adding, a strong institution should be established for the development of transport sector.

In the keynote presentation, New Age Senior Reporter Zahedul Islam said political criminalisation, extortion and unlimited greed of the owners have made the transport sector undisciplined.

According to a World Bank report, around 4000 people were killed and many more injured due to arbitrary driving by unskilled drivers and faulty transports.

Zahedul said faulty launches,

carrying of excessive passengers and rotation system have made the waterway dangerous.

More than 3000 people were killed in around 300 accidents, and 242 cases were filed in the last 36 years, but no accused was punished, he added.

Communist Party of Bangladesh President Manjurul Ahsan Khan said mafias have destroyed the transport sector by creating anarchy.

"The government must formulate an environment-friendly transport policy instead of making a profit-making scheme," he said.

Prof Alamgir Mujibul Haque of Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology said the city footpaths, which are mostly occupied for other purposes, should be freed for the pedestrians.

Suggesting formation of a transport commission, Prof Abu Ahmed of Dhaka University said the railway could be made a company with share

from the private sector to make it a modern and profitable mode of transportation.

National Professor Dr Nurul Islam suggested increase of facilities for traffic police and punishment in case of their irregularities.

Additional Deputy Police Commissioner Mohammad Shahjahan said one of the reasons for traffic jam is leasing of government spaces by Dhaka City Corporation.

Lack of training and facilities makes it impossible for the traffic police to play their due role on the streets, he noted.

Former secretary AZM Abdul Ali and CAB General Secretary Quazi Faruque also spoke at the discussion chaired by CAB President Borhan Ahmed and moderated by Barrister Turin Afroz.

## Six-storey bldg tilts at Tejgaon Residents evacuated

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) and police personnel yesterday evening evacuated the residents of a heavily tilted building and other adjacent houses at Tejgaon Industrial Area in the city to avoid untoward incident.

Locals said the six-storey building, located at Uttar Begun Bari area and residence of about 150 people, started to tilt a week ago.

They said the house, owned by one Reaz Uddin, was planned for a three-storey one.

Police have been deployed around the building. The dwellers fear of a large accident.

## Arrest killers of ex-IGP Kabir

### Hasina urges CG

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Awami League (AL) President Sheikh Hasina yesterday urged the caretaker government to immediately arrest the culprits who stabbed former additional IGP Lutful Kabir to death and bring them to book.

The AL chief also demanded proper investigations into the killing of Kabir, also a freedom fighter.

She visited the Uttara residence of the slain police official yesterday to show her last respect. The AL president placed wreaths at the body of Kabir and prayed for salvation of the departed soul.

She spent some time and expressed her sympathy to the bereaved family members, relatives and colleagues.

Hasina said he was a brave freedom fighter and a skilled, honest and competent police officer.

Though Lutful Kabir was a qualified and punctual police official, the BNP-Jamaat coalition government dismissed him illegally immediately after coming to power in 2001, said the AL chief.

Former ambassador Mamtaz Hossain, ex-police officials Nazrul Islam, Abdur Rahim, Kutub Uddin, Mustaque Ahmed, Col (retd) Abdus Salam (Bir Pratik), Hasina's assistant personal assistants Khalid Mahmud Chowdhury and Saifuzzaman Shekhor accompanied Hasina during the visit.

## US delegation to conduct research works on earthquake

A three-member delegation of Colombia University of America will arrive at Dhaka today for conducting research works on earthquake in Bangladesh, says a press release of the Geology Department of Dhaka University (DU).

The team along with a research group of DU will set up 12 Global Positioning Systems (GPS) and 12 Digital Broadband Seismometers at different places of Chittagong, Sylhet, Tangail and Chittagong Hill Tracts from February 10 to March 1.

The decision to set up these GPSs and Seismometers has been taken after conducting a survey at Sylhet and Chittagong region from December 14 to January 20, the release read.

Geological Department, Earth Observatory and Lamont Doherty Earth Observatory of Colombia University in association with National Science Foundation have jointly been conducting these earthquake related research works since 2003, the release added.



Jewellery designed by Brilliant Jewellery Ltd, the first ever top-quality luxury pieces manufactured in Bangladesh, will be modelled at the Paris Comes to Dhaka fashion show at the Sonargaon Hotel, February 9-10. The jewellery was displayed at a press conference at Dhaka Reporters' Unity (DRU) yesterday.

## Norway assures support to CG

UNB, Dhaka

Norwegian Ambassador Ingebjorg Stofring called on Adviser for Foreign Affairs Dr Iftekhhar Ahmed Chowdhury at the latter's office in the city yesterday.

During the meeting, they discussed bilateral matters, including the possibility of enhancing cooperation in the development sectors.

The adviser apprised the ambas-

sador of various steps undertaken by the caretaker government (CG) in order to create a right atmosphere for holding a credible election and ensuring the practice of democratic norms and values.

The Ambassador expressed satisfaction over various actions being undertaken by the Caretaker Government and assured Norway's full support to the government of Dr Fakhruddin Ahmed.