

Steps to ease traffic jam at Dhanmondi lauded

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rate Payers' Association of Dhanmondi Residential Area has lauded the steps taken by Dhaka Metropolitan Police to ease traffic jam and curb noise pollution in the area.

In a joint statement, Founder-President of the association and former minister Mahabub-Uz-Zaman and Vice President Advocate Najmul Hasan said the measures being implemented for the last several days has already paid off.

They also urged the residents of the area to assist the police in this regard.

They also called on all the schools in the area to engage two of their employees to act as community traffic police. The Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) will train them and then use them as community traffic police in the area.

They also urged the authorities to take steps to preserve the Dhanmondi Lake and the park.

The Rate Payers' Association has been working to preserve and beautify the park and the lake for the last 35 years, the statement added.

No UGC budget for salary of RU controversial staffs

RU CORRESPONDENT

The University Grants Commission (UGC) decided that it would not sanction budget for salaries of more than five hundred Rajshahi University (RU) teachers, officials and employees for their recruitment was not made following the due process.

Campus sources said a two-member budget-inspection team of UGC finance committee led by UGC Finance Director Ibrahim Kabir visited the campus recently to investigate the issue of alleged illegal recruitment.

Upon investigation, they found that most of the recruitment was made without UGC permission and not as per the rules and regulation formed by UGC to prevent mass and political recruitment in public universities, campus sources said.

According to UGC rules, if any university needs recruitment, it must take permission from the UGC as well as approval from education and finance ministries, sources said.

Violating the rules, RU authorities recruited the teachers, officials and employees during BNP-Jamaat government tenure under political consideration, the source added.

The team asserted that the recruitment was a gross violation of rules and declared it illegal, adding that if the university authorities do not cancel the recruitment, the UGC will not disburse the last allocated money in the fiscal year 2006-2007.

Moreover, the UGC will not sanction any allocation for additional recruitment, a university high official said.

When contacted, RU VC Prof Altaf Hossain claimed that the recruitment was made against vacant posts.

When asked about UGC sanction, he said "We will present the real picture of the university to the UGC and request them for sanctioning the allocation".

Last year, university teachers and student organisations agitated against alleged mass recruitment, corruption, irregularities and violation of the University Act by the RU administration during the BNP-Jamaat rule.

World Telecom Day today

UNB, Dhaka

Bangladesh will observe the 39th World Telecommunication and Information Society Day today along with 189 member countries of International Telecommunication Union (ITU).

This year's theme for the day is 'Connecting the Young: The opportunities of ICT'.

President Iajuddin Ahmed, Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed and Finance and Post and Telecommunication Adviser AB Mirza M Azizul Islam have issued messages on the occasion.

In his message, Iajuddin hoped that the International communities and all stakeholders in ICT would take appropriate measures to connect the young with this sector.

He said telecommunications as well as ICTs, in recent time, have facilitated people to come closer than ever before, irrespective of their geographical locations and national identities.

"Considering the enormous power of ICT in socio-economic development, more and more people around the globe are involving themselves in this sector," he added.

Fakhruddin, in his message, urged all to ensure proliferation of basic ICT services to the common people, particularly, to the young who are the driving force behind innovation in the development and use of new technologies.

To mark the day, a programme will be held at Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Centre at 10:00am.

Finance adviser will attend the programme as the chief guest while chairman of Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission Maj Gen Manjurul Alam and Post and Telecommunications Secretary Sheikh Khurshid Alam as special guests.

Engr M Monwar Hossain of Bangladesh Telegraph and Telephone Board will present a keynote paper on the theme of the day.

Besides, Bangladesh T&T Board has arranged a discussion highlighting different aspects of the day in Bangladesh Television and Bangladesh Betar.

BCS (Telecom) Samity is going to publish a special supplement in different dailies and publish special issue of "Teletech" journal. It will also hold a seminar at Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Centre.



US Ambassador Patricia A Butenis makes a gesture during a meeting with Awami League President Sheikh Hasina at her Sudha Sadan residence in the city yesterday.

Road crash kills BCC mayor's gunman

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

Gunman of Barisal City Corporation (BCC) mayor was killed and a BCC official and driver of the official jeep of the mayor were injured in a road accident on Bhanga-Mawa road in Faridpur district on yesterday morning.

The accident occurred when a tyre of the jeep, on duty to pick up BCC mayor from Mawa ferry ghat, was punctured, leading the vehicle's way to a roadside ditch.

BCC Mayor Majibur Rahman Sarwar was returning to Barisal from Dhaka.

The dead was identified as Tipu Sultan, 29, a constable of Barisal district special branch, hailed from Charkanda of Bhola Sadar.

The injured were identified as Altaf Hossain Al Mamun, public relations officer of BCC.

Local people rushed the injured to Bhanga upazila health complex who were later shifted to Faridpur Medical College Hospital.

Doctors on duty declared Tipu dead and sent Altaf Hossain to Dhaka for better treatment.



A team of mobile court led by Magistrate Rokon-ud-Dowla raids the Karatoa Cables factory at Bangshal in the city yesterday. The factory was fined Tk 50,000 for manufacturing cables without the approval from the Bangladesh Standards and Testing Institution (BSTI).

6 arrested on charge of encroaching PDB land

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Six alleged land grabbers were arrested on charge of encroaching valuable lands of Power Development Board (PDB) at Bakalia in the port city yesterday.

Sources said the land grabbers led by Shamsul Islam Chowdhury encroached around half acres of land worth Tk four crore after removing the signboard of PDB Bakalia Grid Sub Station and demolishing the boundary wall at around 11:30am.

On information, a mobile court led by PDB Magistrate Mohiuddin Al Faruq rushed to the spot along with other senior officials.

With the help of Bakalia police, the mobile court arrested the land grabbers and recovered the land PDB kept reserved for extension of the sub-station, sources said.

The arrestees were later produced before the court and sent to jail custody, the sources added.

Sources said the same mobile court of PDB in a drive on May 3

6 arrested on charge of encroaching PDB land

recovered the land that had been encroached by Shamsul Islam and his associates for the last three years.

After recovering the land, PDB put up a signboard and erected the boundary wall which the encroachers removed once again yesterday.

The other arrestees were identified as Rafiqul Islam, Md Anwar Hossain, Abu Yusuf, Iqbal Khan and Md Abdul Kuddus.

13 TIB suggestions to KCC mayor

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) yesterday placed 13 suggestions before KCC Mayor Sheikh Tayebur Rahman urging him to take necessary steps to gear up services for greater interest of citizens.

The suggestions include eradication of mosquitoes, realisation of municipal taxes, implementation of healthcare project and proper registration of birth and death.

A nine-member team of TIB and Shachetan Nagorik Committee exchanged views with city mayor at 11:00am in his office at Nagor Bhaban.

Members of the team include Editor of the Daily Tribune Begum Ferdousi Ali, Chairperson of Khulna Citizens' Forum Sheikh Abdul Kayyum, Khulna Bureau Chief of the daily Prothom Alo Sheikh Abu Hasan, Ward Commissioner Khairuzzaman Khoka, correspondent of Channel i AK Hiru, Programme Organiser of TIB Sheikh Bashir Ahmed, Assistant Programme Officer of TIP Nakib Rajiv and PRO of KCC Sardar Abu Taher.

City mayor assured the team that the suggestions would be implemented in phases if fund is available.

Voter list, nat'l ID card

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"The way the voters go to polling stations will have to be applied to bring prospective voters to the registration centres. We are planning to assign representatives from local government bodies, both sitting and former, chowkidars and ansars to bring people to the centres," Huda said.

"We are even examining if these centres could be set up in the neighbourhoods," he added.

Election Commissioner Sahul Hossain told The Daily Star that usually a polling station covers one big or two small villages. But if the voters' registration centres are set up in the neighbourhoods, the number of centres will increase for each village and city ward.

In its demonstration, the army team explained to journalists the ways for simultaneous preparation of the voter list and national identity cards.

They said the field level task for voter listing will be completed within five-six months—by January 2008, according to the EC plan to start the task in August.

"A draft electoral roll of an area will be published one day after the task for that area is completed. And we hope that the Election Commission will get the master copy of the voter list with photographs after five-six months," a senior army official told reporters.

Talking to reporters, CEC Huda however said he cannot guess any time line until the task begins at the field level.

The army experts team said they suggested for collecting particulars from people aged 16 and above. They showed reporters a form that will collect particulars about a prospective voter on 25-26 issues. However,

the EC will decide about the form, they said.

Asked if army personnel will be involved at the root level of the task, they said the EC will take decision in this regard.

Explaining the plan, the army team said the voters' registration forms will be distributed among those who will visit the centres and the officials at the centres will help the prospective voters fill them in.

During the demonstration, the army team prepared a sample voter list containing particulars of two of the present reporters and prepared their national identity cards using a computer program in about 20 minutes.

The software was developed locally under the supervision of the army, they said.

On the political parties' demand for consultation with them on preparing the voter list, the CEC said the preparation of the voter list with photographs is a settled issue. The political parties demanded it, and so the EC did not consult with them.

"If a consensus is reached on some major issue, it is the responsibility of the Election Commission to decide how the task will be implemented. It is not possible to discuss all things with the political parties," he added.

"However, we are still saying that the political parties are our main clients and nothing will be done without discussing with them," the CEC said.

On the political parties' demand for following the laws while preparing the voter list, he said the existing laws do not allow a voter list with photographs. "We have decided to amend the laws for voter list with photographs," Huda said.