

HARASSMENT OF PASSENGERS BY AUTO-RICKSHAW DRIVERS

CMP comes to grips with irregularities

ABDULLAH AL MAHMUD

The Chittagong Metropolitan Police (CMP) will set up a Traffic Complain Management Centre (TCMC) in the port city next week to lessen sufferings of CNG-run auto-rickshaw passengers.

The initiative has been taken to achieve further success in the ongoing drives against the auto-rickshaws plying without meter and use of cellphone while driving the vehicles.

The centre will be set up at the ground floor of Chittagong City Corporation-owned building that houses Zaman Hotel at the GEC Intersection, sources said.

Three mobile teams headed by an assistant commissioner will work at the centre where seven operators of the CMP traffic department will receive complaints.

Any passenger or commuter can register complaints against auto-rickshaw drivers or any other traffic anomalies for overcharging of fare or harassment by dialing the traffic police help-line numbers 01919911911-13; 01727-400400, 01727-400500, 01727-500500 at anytime, said the sources.

Responding to the complaints the mobile teams will

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rush to the spot to solve the problem, the sources said.

Deputy Commissioner (Traffic) Mohammad Ali Miah said they have already a lot of complaints against plying of CNG-run auto-rickshaws with meters switched off and harassment of the passengers by the drivers.

He said they have some 90 percent success in the drive against the auto-rickshaws plying without meter. But, the percentage is showing a declining tendency recently prompting us to intensify the drive, he added.

The centre will also help achieve success in the drive against use of cellphone while driving vehicles alongside checking other traffic anomalies posing risk of accidents, Ali

member team patrol the city streets from 7:00am to 10:00pm.

On the first two days of the drive, the team seized some 82 licences for using cellphone by the drivers while driving the auto-rickshaws as well as for violating traffic rules, the sources added.

Abdul Jalil Mandal, an employee of a multi-national company at Kalurghat, said a very few drivers now run auto-rickshaws without meter.

Shib Prasad Dey, a resident of Anderkilla Sirajuddollah Road, said an auto-rickshaw with meter helps him go to GEC intersection from his residence at a maximum fare of Tk 25 while it takes Tk 35 without meter.

CMP Commissioner M Akbar Ali said police alone will hardly be able to put a total end to the suffering of the passengers or commuters unless CCC and Chittagong Development Authority (CDA) come up with new roads and foot over-bridge.

He said as such they are now launching drives that will reduce harassment of the passengers as well as the crimes at least to some extent with little logistics and manpower.

said. Sources said on an average some 25 auto-rickshaws are detained in the port city a day for running without meter or with faulty meter.

Traffic police seized licences of many drivers during the drives for harassing the passengers, particularly the female ones, they said.

The CMP traffic department launched the drive to check use of cellphone by the drivers from March 1 since the practice has increased the risk of road accidents.

The use of cellphone also helps a syndicate of three-wheeler drivers keep link with the criminals and carry out criminal activities, said the sources.

Under the drive a five-

Scarcity of drinking water poses serious health hazard

Most residents at Ward 6 depend on dirty pond water

NUR UDDIN ALAMGIR

Many residents of East Sholoshohar are to depend on unusable pond water for household work as the Water and Sewerage Authority (Wasa) is unable to supply optimum water for them in the ward.

Scarcity of drinking water has posed a serious health hazard to around 25,000 lower income people of the Ward-6 under Chittagong City Corporation (CCC) near Bohoddarhat Intersection.

Sources said people living in Baraipara, Ghasiapara, Omar Ali Matabar Moholla and Purbapara under the ward have no other options but to using the blackish and brownish dirty water of 10 ponds as the supply of Wasa water is hardly available there.

The women wash utensils and even vegetables and rice for cooking as well as the people take bath in the ponds, some of them are covered with water hyacinth turning into perfect breeding centres for mosquitoes.

The low-income people of 150 colonies on some 3km patch of land depend on the ponds in the CCC ward.

Locals said they collect Wasa water from hydrant standing in long queues only for drinking.

"The water provided by Wasa can only meet our demand for drinking water," said Mohammad Sultan Mian, a shopkeeper at Baraipara.

Sultan said they suffer from different types of water-borne diseases frequently as they are

bound to use the dirty water from the ponds.

Shah Alam, a resident of Ghasiapara, said the shallow tube-wells were of no use to them due to fall in ground water level. Besides, he said they cannot afford to set up a deep tube-well.

He said the pond water has also become stinky as the filthy water from nearby overflowing drains finds way to the pond during rain.

He said they have informed the local ward commissioner about their miseries repeatedly in vain.

Baraipara Moholla (South) Unnayan Committee General Secretary Amir Uddin said a few house owners collect Wasa water for household use from the main supply line with the help of electric motors.

He said the tenants are bound to collect water from the dirty ponds for fulfilling daily demands.

Local Ward Commissioner Dost Mohammad said he himself uses the pond and tube-well water and has nothing to do with the problem due to the scarcity of Wasa water in his ward.

Dost Mohammad, who is rather quite indifferent to his responsibility about the problem, said none of the residents ever complained him in this regard.

Chittagong Wasa Superintendent Engineer (Treatment and Production Circle) Mohammad Abdul Karim Chowdhury said they have not received any complaint from Ward No-6 in this regard.

Dr Mezbah Uddin Ahmed of a

state-run cement factory said use of dirty water might cause the residents fall victim to different skin diseases and waterborne diseases like typhoid and jaundice.

Dr Monwarul Haque Shamim of Chittagong Medical College Hospital (CMCH) said the pond covered with water hyacinth also has turned into breeding centre of mosquitoes to spread malaria among the local residents.

He said alongside Wasa, CCC also can play an important role in setting up deep-tube wells in those areas. Benevolent people or welfare organisations can be engaged in such initiatives, he added.

Besides, measures can be taken to clean the ponds and maintain them raising the banks, he said.



A woman washes rice using dirty pond water at Baraipara as water supplied by Wasa hardly reaches them.

STAR PHOTO

theweekthatwas

Girl guides camp ends

The three-day long 'District Girl Guides Camp-2008' concluded in the port city on Saturday.

Bangladesh Girls Guides Association, Chittagong chapter organised the camp at Chittagong Government Girls' High School.

A total of 197 guides, guiders, members and commissioners from 22 institutions under seven districts of Chittagong division took part in the camp.

The camp included hoisting flag, tents setting and session on health awareness.

Chittagong Education Board Chairman Prof Muhammad Yusuf was the chief guest at the concluding ceremony while Girl Guide Regional Commissioner Rahenara Begum, Monwara Begum, headmistress Halima Khatun, Chittagong Region Treasurer Mahbuba Khatun and local commissioner Gita Chakraborty attended the camp.



Artistes of Rakta Karabi perform at a function in memory of drama personality Selim Al Deen at the Theatre Institute Chittagong (TIC) auditorium on Thursday.

Commissioner warns corrupt cops

Chittagong Metropolitan Police (CMP) Commissioner M Akbar Ali said police officials if found engaged in any unlawful activity will be brought under trial and given exemplary punishment.

He urged the police to provide better services to the people as the force is run with the tax money of the common people.

He was addressing a view exchange meeting on 'Community Policing' in the port city on Saturday.

East Nasirabad Al Falah Housing Society and Khulshi Police Station jointly organised the meeting with society President SM Ekramul Azim in

the chair.

Deputy Commissioner (North) Mostafa Kamal, Assistant Commissioner Ashiqul Hoque Bhuiyan of Detective Branch (DB) of Police, former president of Chittagong Press Club (CPC) Abu Sufian and local ward commissioner Ahmadur Rahman Siddique also spoke at the meeting.

CMP commissioner emphasised

the need for introducing community policing as the system can build a bridge between police and common people.

Japanese firms recruit 16 Bangladeshi marine cadets

A batch of 16 marine cadets, trained at private-owned Bangladesh Maritime Training Institute (BMTI), were picked up directly by two globally acclaimed marine companies of Japan for their ocean-going vessels, ushering in an opportunity of employment for the Bangladeshi mariners in the sector abroad.

This is the first time that marine cadets have been selected directly by overseas employers. The employments of the cadets are on long-term basis and covers scholarship for them.

The courses for the cadets were conducted by BMTI, a private sector institute while the training programme was jointly sponsored by Haque & Sons Ltd, Singapore-based

Uniq Line Pvt Ltd and First Marine Services.

The cadets received certificates and medals at a ceremony at BMTI Chittagong office on Monday in presence of top officials of the two Japanese employers' firms. Of the cadets, 12 will join Tokyo Marine Co Ltd and four First Marine Services Co Ltd.

Captain AKM Shafiqullah, director general of Department of Shipping, Kenji Arima, executive officer and general manager of Tokyo Marine, Captain M Nishizumi, general manager of First Marine Services, Enamul Haque Chowdhury, managing director of BMTI and Haque & Sons, Rumana Haque Chowdhury, director of Haque & Sons, Captain Zaki Ahad, principal of BMTI, spoke at the ceremony.

Nursing Course launched

Nursing course for the 2007-2008 session was introduced at Chittagong Maa O Shishu Hospital Nursing Institute on Saturday.

Health and Family Welfare Ministry Joint Secretary (Hospital and Nursing) Mohammad Golam Kuddus

formally inaugurated the course as the chief guest at a ceremony at the institute.

Kuddus called upon all to work hard for developing the institute as one of the best institutes in Bangladesh.

He assured the authorities of all help for development of the institute, hospital and college.

The Hospital Executive Committee President SM Fazul Karim presided over the function while Shafi Motors Limited Chairman Mohammad Shafi, Human Right activists Abu Mohammad Nipar, Sadia Chowdhury, the hospital Executive Committee Vice President Syed Mohammad Abu Taher, General Secretary Dr Anjuman Ara Islam, Treasurer SM Morshed Hossain and Ma O Shishu Hospital Medical College Principal Prof MA Taher Khan were present.

Later, Abu Mohammad Nipar and Sadia Chowdhury handed over a cheque for Tk 2 lakh for two beds at the hospital.

Blood donation camp opens

A month-long blood donation camp was inaugurated at Chittagong

International Trade Fair (CITF) at Railway Polo Ground in the port city on Sunday.

Rotary Club of Agrabad, Chittagong Port City and Chittagong University jointly organised the camp in cooperation with the Fatema Begum Red Crescent Blood Centre.

Local daily Purbokone Publisher Jasim Uddin Chowdhury inaugurated the camp as the chief guest.

Jasim in his speech said blood of a man can help survive of life of a serious patient.

"Blood donation is not a audacious job but a best will of a man," he said. He emphasised the need for creating awareness among the mass people in this regard.

Rotary Club Assistant Governor Karnal Uddin, Agrabad Rotary Club President SK Azim Pintu, Chittagong Chamber of Commerce and Industries (CCCI) Secretary Osman Gani Chowdhury, Red Crescent Blood Centre Chief Dr MA Jalil Chowdhury, Programme Organiser Jasim Uddin and members of the clubs were present at the opening session.

CU Bengali Dept reunion held

The two-day reunion of Alumni

Association of Chittagong University (CU) Bengali Department was held at the picturesque Foy's Lake Amusement Park in the port city with much enthusiasm and festivity.

Prof Anisuzzaman inaugurated the function on Friday by releasing colourful balloons in presence of huge alumni of the department.

Poet Ovik Osman presided over the inaugural function.

Executive President of the Alumni Association Journalist Bishwajit Chowdhury, Vice-President Advocate Shihabuddin Mahmud Ratan and General Secretary Zinnah Chowdhury, spoke at the function.

Recalling his long relationship as former teacher of the department, Prof Anisuzzaman said the CU Bengali Department has contributed a lot to the development and enrichment of the Bengali literature and culture.

Thanking the teachers and students of the department for arranging such a function, he said everlasting warm and respectful relations between the teachers and students of the department will increase further through such a congregation.

The function was followed by reminiscence of the participants and cultural programme.



The successful students of 1st batch of Bangladesh Maritime Training Institute pose for photograph with the guests at the certificate giving ceremony at the institute auditorium on Tuesday.



Students recite poem at the convocation of Bhodhon, a recitation school, at Theatre Institute Chittagong (TIC) auditorium on Friday.