

DU increases dependence on rented buses

Cannot purchase new buses due to fund constraints

RAKIB AHAMMED

Dhaka University (DU) spends over Tk 1 crore annually for renting buses to provide transportation service to non-resident students.

The money could be saved by purchasing new buses, sources said.

The university administration spent Tk 1.25 crore for renting buses last year and allocated Tk 1.6 crore this year in order to provide transportation service to non-resident students instead of purchasing new buses.

The administration purchased its last bus in 2001.

Due to lack of initiative by the authorities concerned to buy new buses, the traditional 'red-

coloured-bus' service of the university is now under the threat of extinction.

Sources at DU transport section said the university authorities now prefer renting to purchasing new buses to avoid maintenance and other related costs, and to avoid allegations of corruption in this sector.

The bus service for around 15,000 non-resident students depends virtually on renting buses from BRTC.

The authorities provide over Tk 75,000 to BRTC as bus fare daily for 46 trips on 13 roads in and outside the city.

"What else we can do? We have to provide service to huge number of non-resident students. We do

not have adequate buses and cannot purchase new buses due to lack of fund. Existing buses are also becoming inoperative one after another," said Pro-Vice-Chancellor Prof AFM Yusuf Haider while talking to The Daily Star on July 8.

"We have urged the government for fund many times to purchase new buses. But there was no response. So, we have no alternative but to renting buses because we cannot ask the students to come to the university using public buses at their own expenses," he added.

"While I was in the college, I looked at the red-coloured buses of DU with a great fascination. Now, I study here but I cannot avail those buses, because most of the buses

on our roads are rented from BRTC," said Ahsanul Haque Chanchal, a student of finance department.

"To preserve the tradition of the university, authorities should concentrate on purchasing new buses. If BRTC denies to provide the service we shall have to approach a private company, which would destroy the dignity of the university," he added.

According to transport section, their own buses can provide service to only six to seven thousand students.

The transportation section of the university started its journey with seven buses in December 1980.



Hindu devotees pull a chariot of Sri Jagannath on a city street on the occasion of 'Uto Rath Jatra' festival yesterday. The photo was taken in Teacher-Student Centre area of Dhaka University.

Call to implement 7th Wage Board Award, reinstate journo

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leaders of Dhaka Union of Journalists (DUJ) yesterday called for implementation of the 7th Wage Board Award in newspaper offices and news agencies.

The DUJ staged a token hunger strike on the National Press Club premises in protest against the termination of journalists working with the daily Ittefaq, Jugantor, Shamakal, Jai Jai Din, Janakantha, Rtv and Ekushey.

The union leaders demanded immediate reinstatement of the journalists.

They also called on the newspapers to pay salary arrears to the journalists.

The Bangladesh Federal Union of Journalists (BFUJ) will also stage demonstrations across the country at 11:00am on July 20 to press home the demands.

Union leaders Iqbal Sobhan Chowdhury, Abdul Jalil Bhuiyan, Omar Faruque, Shahjahan Mia, Altaf Mahmud, Mollah Jalal, Asif Siraj, Nazimuddin Shaymol, Shaheed UJ Alam, Jahangir Alam Akash, Hasanuzzaman Shamim, Pathik Saha, Gazi Zahurul Islam and Salimullah Selim spoke at the hunger strike programme presided over by DUJ President Shah Alamgir.

Leaders of various political and rights organisations expressed solidarity with the demands of the journalists. They are Nurul Islam of Gonotantri Party, Shirin Akhter of Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal, Dr Wajedul Islam Khan of SKOP, Moshrefa Mishu of Biplobi Oikya Kantha, Shahida Parveen of Jatiya Nari Sramik, Nasir Uddin of Biplobi Workers Party, Razekuzzaman Ratan of BSD, Dr Kamrul Hasan Khan of Peshajibi Samannay Parishad, Khalekuzzaman Limon of Samajtantrik Chharta Front, Abdullah Al Mamun of Karmojibi Nari and Kazi Faruque Ahmed of Teachers' Association.



(From left) Writer KM Nurul Huda, Academic Press and Publishers Library (APPL) Managing Director Shahina Rahman, Brac University Vice Chancellor Prof Jamilur Reza Chowdhury, APPL Chairman Dr Mizanur Rahman Shelley, Prof M Firoz Ahmed of Buet and UGC Chairman Prof Nazrul Islam hold copies of a book titled 'Municipal Solid Waste Management: Bangladesh Perspective' at its publication ceremony at the National Press Club in the city yesterday.

Allow Khaleda, her sons to go abroad for treatment

Qureshi urges govt UNB, Dhaka

Progressive Democratic Party (PDP) Chairman Dr Ferdous Ahmed Qureshi yesterday urged the government to allow detained former premier Khaleda Zia and her ailing two sons to go abroad for better medical treatment.

"We're expressing grave concern over reports about critical health conditions of Khaleda Zia and her two sons," he told a press briefing at his party office.

He said the government should send Khaleda Zia and her two sons -- Tarique Rahman and Arafat Rahman -- abroad for treatment considering their critical health conditions following the same rules applied for Sheikh Hasina.

Qureshi, however, demanded that the serious cases be disposed of before the polls so that the corrupt suspects who would come out clean could contest the elections. "We also demand better treatment of the detainees now under trial," he said.

He said all corrupt suspects, including the VIPs, are under the trial of 10 special courts and the expediting the trial process has become a demand of the people. "Some 118 people, including former ministers, state ministers, MPs, retired bureaucrats and businessmen, have already been sentenced to various jail terms by the special courts."

About the upcoming local-body elections, the PDP chairman hoped that the next general election would be a case to make an evaluation how the government would hold the city corporation and municipality elections on August 4.

Qureshi alleged that the verdicts in the country's High Court are being influenced as it has become hostage to a few top lawyers.

The PDP chairman urged the government to take steps to formulate a law to refrain senior lawyers and law teachers from appearing in the courts presided by their juniors or students. "This matter should be taken into account with importance in the greater national interest," he said.

He criticised the statement of an Election Commissioner apprehending that many accused of corruption and terrorism might not be kept out of the election race for the limitations of law.

"There's no doubt that people will get frustrated by such statement from an election commissioner and the post 1/11 anti-corrupt drive has raised various questions in public mind," he said.

'Improper management of solid waste pollutes environment'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a book launching ceremony yesterday said improper management of solid waste of the municipalities pollute the environment and make public health vulnerable to various diseases.

Though some initiatives were taken by the authorities, the waste management scenario still remains at an awful situation, they added. They said this at the publication ceremony of the book titled 'Municipal Solid Waste Management: Bangladesh Perspective' by KM Nurul Huda.

Prof Jamilur Reza Chowdhury unwrapped the cover of the book at the National Press Club in the city.

In the book, the author said, around 2.7 crore people and 5.0 million households of 229 municipalities, including city corporations, of the country are responsible for generating around 13,000 metric tonnes of solid waste a day.

Speaking as the chief guest, Prof Jamilur Reza Chowdhury said every country of the world faces the problem of solid waste, but the developed countries solve the problem by taking various steps.

"Though some initiatives have been taken for waste management in

the country, some areas still remain untreated for human habitation due to non-disposal of wastes," said Prof Chowdhury, adding "Some developments have been made in solid waste management, including community-level initiative."

Presided over by Academic Press and Publishers Library (APPL) Chairman Dr Mizanur Rahman Shelley, the programme was addressed by urban planner and UGC Chairman Prof Nazrul Islam, Prof M Firoz Ahmed of Buet, Waste Concern Director and APPL Managing Director Shahina Rahman and engineer Iftekhar Enayetullah.

Pakistan Rangers (Punjab) DG arrives today

UNB, Dhaka

Director General of Pakistani Border Security Force, Pakistan Rangers (Punjab) Major General Mohammad Harun Aslam will arrive here today on a weeklong official tour.

The Rangers DG, who is leading an eight-member delegation, will make a courtesy call on his Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) counterpart tomorrow, said a BDR press release.

The delegation will exchange views on training and experiences with high officials at BDR headquarters.

They will also visit Cox's Bazar, Teknaf, Rifles Training Centre and School (RTC&S), Chittagong sector headquarters, Baitul Ijtihad Chittagong, Defence Services Command and Staff College (DSCSC) and BDR museum during the tour. They are expected to leave Dhaka on July 19.

Population Day observed

DU CORRESPONDENT

The department of Population Sciences at Dhaka University (DU) yesterday observed the World Population Day amid daylong programmes on the campus.

The day began with a colourful procession led by DU Vice Chancellor Prof SMA Faiz from in front of the Aparajeyo Bangla at 11:00am.

Acting Chairman of the department Prof Mehedi Hasan Khan, teachers and students joined the procession.

A number of programmes, including an inter-hall debate competition, freshers' reception, an open discussion on 'Meet the unmet need of family planning. It is a right, let's make it real' and a prize giving ceremony, were held at Nabab Nawab Ali Chowdhury Senate Building in the afternoon.

Four killed in road accidents

METRO DESK

At least four people were killed and two others injured in separate road accidents in Habiganj and Dinajpur yesterday and on Friday night.

UNB from Habiganj: Three people, including a woman and her son, were killed and two others injured critically in a road accident on Dhaka-Sylhet highway at Mirpur in Bahubol upazila yesterday.

The dead were identified as Najju Akhter, 20, her son Najmul, 1, and auto-rickshaw driver Tajul Islam, 30.

Police said the accident occurred when a Sreemongol-bound bus hit an auto-rickshaw, killing the two passengers and the driver on the spot.

Two passengers -- Abdur Rouf Shaheen, a teacher of Bahubol Degree College, and Anu Miah -- were rushed to Sadar hospital in critical condition.

The agitated people put up barricade on Dhaka-Sylhet highway following the incident, disrupting traffic for about an hour.

Our Correspondent from Dinajpur adds: A cyclist, who was injured in a road accident here on Friday morning, died at Dinajpur Medical College Hospital on Friday night.

The dead identified as Md Nazrul Islam, 35, son of Muhammad Hanif of village Kathaldangi under Haripur upazila of Thakurgaon was injured in a road accident at Haripur upazila of Thakurgaon on Friday morning.

Police said the accident occurred when a shallow engine-truck hit him from behind at Tengrya village under Haripur-Thakurgaon highway, leaving him injured critically. He was rushed to Dinajpur Medical College Hospital where he succumbed to his injuries.

Qureshi alleged that the verdicts in the country's High Court are being influenced as it has become hostage to a few top lawyers.

The PDP chairman urged the government to take steps to formulate a law to refrain senior lawyers and law teachers from appearing in the courts presided by their juniors or students. "This matter should be taken into account with importance in the greater national interest," he said.

He criticised the statement of an Election Commissioner apprehending that many accused of corruption and terrorism might not be kept out of the election race for the limitations of law.

"There's no doubt that people will get frustrated by such statement from an election commissioner and the post 1/11 anti-corrupt drive has raised various questions in public mind," he said.

JATIYA ANDHA SANGSTHA

Call to hold election to stop misappropriation of fund

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a press conference yesterday called for holding an election of the Jatiya Andha Sangstha (national association for the blind) to save the organisation and stop misappropriation of its huge fund.

They said since 1995 no election of the executive committee was held but as per its constitution the election is supposed to be held every three years.

The press conference was organised by the general members

of the organisation at Dhaka Reporters Unity auditorium.

In a keynote paper Mohammad Ayub Ali Howladar, a general member, said two executive committees now exist in this organisation in violation of its constitution.

Upon two writ petitions filed by the general members, a court stayed their activities temporarily, but the members of two committees did not follow the verdict, he added.

Ayub said the general members also tried to draw the attention of the social welfare department, police and administration but they did not get any positive response from them against the committees.

He alleged that members of the executive committees during their tenures misappropriated huge amount of the organisation.

Ayub said they looted Tk 3 crore received from the sale of development coupons of this organisation in 2000.

Besides, they also misappropriated around Tk 30 lakh donated by a Norwegian donor, he added.

The general members named M Khalilur Rahman, vice-president of a committee, and Kamal Hossain, his prime associate, as the main leaders of the corruptions.

Other associates of these two people are Khandakar Mobarak Hossain, Kazi Anowarul Karim, Mohammad Sirajul Islam, Abu

Bakar Siddiki and Abdur Rahman.

The general members alleged that Khalilur misappropriated Tk 1.5 crore which the organisation received from the government.

For the last 20 years, Khalilur and Kamal have been submitting the audit reports to the authorities concerned using the names of false audit organisations, they added.

Mohammad Chan Mia, Mohammad Hazrat Ali, Mohammad Salim, Nargis Begum, Abdul Kuddus, Abdul Motiur Rahman Mollah, Monju Akter, Minhaj Uddin and SM Yunus Rahman also addressed the press conference.

Prisoner dies in Dinajpur

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

A prisoner of Dinajpur jail died at Dinajpur Medical College Hospital (DMCH) after falling sick on Friday midnight, hospital and Dinajpur jail authority sources said.

The dead was identified as Md Abdur Rashid, 45, son of Muhammad Ali of Uttar Goshapur village under Dinajpur Sadar upazila. The victim was arrested in November last year on murder and robbery charges.

Dinajpur jail sources said Abdur Rashid, prisoner number 3300/2008, was gossiping with his co-prisoners, but he suddenly fell sick at around 9:25pm and was rushed to the DMCH.

But the victim succumbed to his illness after fighting for life for more than half an hour, sources added.

Family members of the victim, who were waiting at the jail gate to receive the body, said he was well on Friday when they met him at the jail.

Jail authority sources said he might have died of severe brain stroke.

Lightning kills 2 in Jamalpur

UNB, Jamalpur

Two people were killed in lightning at Sarderpara village in Dewanganj upazila yesterday.

The dead were identified as Nur Mohammad, 14, and Jahiran, 55. Sources said lightning struck Nur Mohammad when he was working in a cropland.

Jahiran was killed in lightning when she was taking bath in the Jhingram river.



The department of population sciences at Dhaka University takes out a colourful procession on the campus yesterday to mark the World Population Day.

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