

Illegal parking worsens traffic situation

DWAIKAYAN BARUA

It was a hectic afternoon at the busy Sheikh Mujib Road on Sunday when everyone was rushing towards home after office.

Salahuddin, a driver, suddenly parked his car almost on the middle of the busy road near a motor parts shop to change seat covers without caring that such an illegal parking might create serious gridlock.

Like this, a number of vehicles for installing parts remain parked all the day occupying a good portion on both the sides of the road stretching from Dewanhat to Choumuhan where over 200 motor parts shops are located.

When asked about the public suffering due to parking Salahuddin paid little attention to the matter.

Two on-duty traffic constables in front of Dewanhat Fire Service preferring anonymity said their daylong efforts for maintaining smooth vehicular movement on the road have become fruitless for this type of whimsical and illegal parking. The two constables blamed the traffic sergeants as they hardly take action against illegal parking.

Illegal parking on the road has been creating congestion everyday from Tigerpass to Barik Building Moor, a distance of around two kilometres.

On-road parking of vehicles is one of the main reasons behind serious traffic congestion on different parts of the port city including GEC, Muradpur, CDA Avenue, OR Nizam Road, Zakir Hossain Road, Station Road, Dhaka Trunk Road, Madarbari, Shuvapuri Bus Stand, EPZ intersection and Olankar.

The situation has worsened from the

very beginning of the Ramadan with poor traffic management by the traffic department of Chittagong Metropolitan Police (CMP).

Pointing to the acute shortage of manpower, Deputy Commissioner (Traffic) Md Mainul Islam said they have already taken some initiatives like mobile court operations with the help of Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA) against violation of traffic rules.

Commuters fear a further more bitter experience ahead of the Eid-Ul-Fitr in the upcoming days when vehicular and public mobility will increase.

Minhaj, a service holder, said usually the traffic congestion starts troubling the city dwellers since the middle of Ramadan but this time it emerged too early.

He stressed immediate initiatives by the traffic department to help commuters get rid of the acute gridlock before the Eid shopping gets momentum.

Commuters suffer in many of the city's busy parts since the office and school time at 9.00am due to acute gridlock.

The traffic department has now only 40 sergeants, out of 66 approved posts, to handle the situation.

Sources said 16 posts of traffic sergeants remained vacant in the CMP for long while the rest 10 officers are on leave or have been transferred.

Mainul said CMP has appointed members of community police at shopping malls and markets in order to help the regular law enforcing agency curb crimes as well as to ease traffic congestion in the adjoining areas of the markets.

We have decided to take help from other agencies like Rapid Action Battalion (RAB) from September 10 for maintaining traffic system ahead of Eid.

The situation has worsened from the



Hawkers in collusion with a section of law enforcers set up makeshift shops occupying almost half of the New Market Road, causing traffic congestion in the area. The photo was taken on Sunday.

ZOBAER HOSSAIN SIKDER

Chittagong General Hospital needs care

ABDULLAH AL MAHMUD

Lack of manpower and proper attention from the government hold back Chittagong General Hospital from turning it into a 250-bed one although it has requisite infrastructure.

It is now running as a 150-bed hospital with the organogram of an 80-bed one while two new buildings constructed with facilities of 100 more beds over a decade ago are lying underutilised, sources said.

A little care of the government to ensure proper manpower and other logistics can easily turn the hospital into a 250-bed one and ease the pressure on Chittagong Medical College Hospital (CMCH) as well, they said.

The hospital was established with a huge compound on 8.5 acres of land amid a scenic beauty of hills and vales of Anderkilla back in 1901.

It was upgraded to a 200-bed hospital and a medical college in 1927.

But, the first public hospital of this region started losing its glory and tradition after Chittagong Medical College Hospital (CMCH) was established in 1959.

All the manpower and students were shifted to CMCH leaving Chittagong General Hospital to run as a 50-bed one.

The hospital was raised to 80-bed hospital after the War of Liberation war and is still running as the same with a project to upgrade it remaining yet to be materialised, sources said.

Proposal was made to upgrade the hospital as a 250-bed one after it was put under the control of district civil surgeon on March

22, 1987.

Responding to the proposal an initiative was taken afresh in 1994 to upgrade it as a 250-bed hospital under a Renovation and Rehabilitation Project of Department of Health.

A project of Tk 4.07 crore was also approved to be implemented in three phases on December 12 the same year.

Under the project two new buildings each with 50-bed capacity were constructed to house a 50-bed children ward and a 50-bed ENT ward.

But, both the buildings have been lying unutilised since their construction in 1998 and the hospital is now running as a 150-bed one.

Of 150 beds, there are 10 cab-

ins, 15 paying beds and 125 general beds.

At present 88 posts of first class medical officers, five second class, 121 third class and 74 fourth class posts are lying vacant.

When contacted Civil Surgeon Dr Md Abu Tayab said, "We are now running the hospital with the logistics sufficient for a 150-bed hospital and manpower provided under an organogram of an 80-bed one."

"We have written to the ministry several times for a new organogram and creation of new posts," he said. "We have also informed Health Minister Dr SM Ruhal Haq when he visited Chittagong on August 13 of the manpower shortage," he said this while talking to this correspon-

dent on Sunday.

"Departments like radiology, cardiology and skin disease have modern machines and other equipment. But, they lack in both the technicians and doctors whom we have to bring on deputation or hire from elsewhere," he said.

Alongside appointment of doctors and some teachers, construction of an academic building and staff quarter on the vast unused land can help build a second medical college hospital in Chittagong, Dr Tayab said.

Sources said power crisis is another major problem for the hospital as the authority is yet to succeed in setting up double line or express line for uninterrupted power supply.



Chittagong General Hospital.



Mechanics are busy installing parts in a car on the busy Sheikh Mujib Road, leaving little room for the vehicular movement.

STAR PHOTO

Developers urged to serve society

The speakers at a view exchange meeting in the port city on Monday urged the property developers to work with an objective to serve the society as well as the country.

Alline Holdings (Pvt) Limited and The Exclusive Holdings (Pvt) Limited, two property developers, jointly organised the view exchange meeting followed by an Iftar party at a local hotel.

MA Malek, editor of the local daily *The Azadi*, was the chief guest while Afser Uddin Chowdhury, editor of local daily *Dainik Karnaphuli*, the special guest at the meeting.

Alline Holdings Limited Chairman Advocate Nasir Uddin Ahmed Chowdhury presided over the meeting while Exclusive Holdings

Limited Chairman Iqbal Hossain Chowdhury made the address of welcome.

Ctg Hawkers' Samity polls Oct 8

The schedule for triennial election of Chittagong Newspaper Hawkers' Multipurpose Cooperative Society Limited was announced on Friday.

The election committee at a meeting with its president journalist Helal Uddin Chowdhury announced the election schedule.

As per the schedule nomination papers will be submitted on September 9. The final list of candidates will be published on September 24 while the polling would be held on October 8 from

9:00am to 5:00pm with one-hour break from 2:00pm.

Two other election committee members Amir Hossain and journalist Nirupam Dasgupta were present during announcement of the schedule.

Aramit declares 50pc dividend

Aramit Limited, a leading cement manufacturer, declared 50 percent dividend for its shareholders at company's 38th annual general meeting recently at Chittagong Club auditorium.

The AGM chaired by Saifuzzaman Chowdhury, chairman and managing director of Aramit Ltd, revealed that the company achieved a net profit of Tk 7.87 crore (70.87 million taka) in 2008, which is 25.63 percent up than

the previous year. During the same period, the company

gave 117.37 million taka to the national exchequer in terms of import duty, income tax and value added tax, he said.

Company Secretary M Salaiman also spoke at the AGM.

Saifuzzaman was elected chairman of the company unanimously at a meeting of the board of directors.

'Appoint trade-related persons in EPB'

Awami League lawmaker and Chittagong Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCCI) President MA Latif emphasised the need for appointing trade-related people in bodies like Export Promotion Bureau

(EPB) and in the posts of trade councillors at Bangladesh missions for effective and better projection of Bangladesh abroad.

He also urged the government to take a policy decision whether it would run the EPB or trade councils of Bangladesh embassies or high commissions abroad by predominantly bureaucrats or government officials. He said the bureaucrats lack in proper knowledge and understanding of bilateral trade and investment potentials of Bangladeshi products.

Latif made this observation on Thursday while briefing journalists about the recent visit to Saudi Arabia and Turkey of a 12-member CCCI trade team led by him.

Castigating the 'frustrating role' of the EPB and Bangladesh missions abroad, he said, "Both EPB and the trade councillors concerned have

failed miserably since independence to project Bangladesh and its potentials and promote different world-class products of Bangladesh."

CCCI Senior Vice President MA Salam, Vice President SM Shafiqul Hoque and directors Shahabuddin Ahmed, SM Abu Tayyab, AKM Akhtar Hossain, SM Mahbubul Islam, M Alamgir Parves, Syed Sagir Ahmed and Chamber Secretary Osman Gani Chowdhury were present at the briefing.

Call to modernise madrasa education

Incorporating knowledge of modern science and technology in Madrasa education can help spread people's Islamic education and Ulema

(religious scholars) should come forward in this regard.

Speakers said this at a Sehri and Iftar item distribution programme at Anwara Upazila complex auditorium in the port city on Saturday.

Addressing the programme as the chief guest local Awami League lawmaker and industrialist Aktheruzzaman Chowdhury Babu called for application of teachings of fasting in both personal and social life for the betterment of humanity.

Upazila Nirbahi Officer Farug Ahmed, Upazila Vice-Chairman Rehana Ferdous, Upazila Social Service Officer Shafiq Uddin and foundation adviser Hafez Abul Hasan Mohammad Kashem were the special guests at the function with Anwara Upazila Chairman and chief adviser Hafiz Anwarul Islam Khan Sawgat in the chair.

the week that was