

CCC indifferent to women commuters' suffering

DWAIPAYAN BARUA

The bus service launched by Chittagong City Corporation (CCC) four months ago for women and children has been stopped suddenly this week, causing suffering to the commuters.

CCC stopped the service titled "Nirapad Jatriseba Service" on October 4 through advertisements in local dailies blaming the BB Enterprise, a private firm responsible for plying the buses, for carrying excess passengers violating the contract.

This was the CCC's fourth such move to run a hassle-free separate bus service for women commuters in the port.

CCC introduced a special bus service for women with 10 buses from private firm Shah Amin to operate on four different routes in the city on April 1 in 2005. But the bus service was stopped after several months as the firm expressed its inability

to run their buses showing huge loss due to poor presence of women passengers.

CCC hired 10 buses from Rainbow City Bus Owners' Association to resume the service in August in 2006, allowing to carry both female and male passengers in two separate portions inside the buses.

It also purchased 10 buses from China and five from local company Navana Limited in October the same year, giving responsibility to BB Enterprise to operate the service.

The service was stopped again after the arrest of Mayor Mohiuddin Chowdhury on March 7 in 2007 as the then CCC authorities refused to continue it.

CCC in its fresh move launched the service titled 'Nirapad Jatriseba Service' on June 6 only on one route from Old Chandgaon police station to Katgar in order to facilitate a hassle-free journey for the commuters especially the women and

children. The same BB Enterprise got the work for two years as the highest bidder in a tender to operate 15 buses.

Female passengers heaved a sigh of relief with the launching of the service again. But sudden closure of the service frustrated them again as travel in public vehicles is difficult for women.

Daily commuting nowadays is a nightmare for Zinnat Ara, working in a private shipping firm. She said she was happy with Nirapad Jatriseba Service since she was certain in getting a seat in the bus after collecting a ticket. Besides, it provided a congenial environment for the women.

Female passengers cannot get on a general bus easily and are often harassed by the men surrounding them, said Nasima, an NGO staff.

Samajtantrik Mahila Forum Coordinator Syeda

Parvin Akhter said it is unfortunate that both the government and the local administration have failed to ensure a smooth service for the female commuters though the number of working women is increasing day by day.

The government should give priority to this service as the private firms usually try to profit, Parvin said, adding that both the government and the local administration are always found indifferent to the problem.

CCC Superintendent Engineer (Mechanical) Abul Hasnat said they have stopped the service since the buses run by BB Enterprise were carrying excess passengers violating the contract, which BB Enterprise proprietor Belayet Hossain Belal denied.

Engineer Hasnat, however, said the CCC will resume the service with more buses in near future.



ZOBAER HOSSAIN SIDDIQ

Implementation of Bayezid Bostami Road Expansion Project by Chittagong Development Authority (CDA) is progressing fast. The photo was taken from in front of the Rubi Gate on Monday.

Work on to make Bayezid Bostami Road a model one

ABDULLAH AL MAHMUD

Widening of Bayezid Bostami Road, a busy road connecting Sholoshahar and Oxygen intersections, is going on in full swing.

Chittagong Development Authority (CDA) is implementing the Tk 24.93 crore project to develop the 4.5km road as a model one. The 24-foot road would be widened up to 92 feet, including a four-foot road median with walkways and drains on both the sides, CDA sources said.

A green patch would also be developed in the shape of a park on both the sides of the road, they said.

The busy road running through Bayezid Bostami industrial area had been under tremendous pressure of vehicular movement as several thousand vehicles, including trucks, city service buses and other private transports, ply it round the clock.

Besides, the road also served as a part of both Chittagong-Hathazari-Fatikhari-Khagrachhari Road and Chittagong-Hathazari-Raozan-Rangamati Road till the bus station of inter-district buses was shifted to Oxygen intersection.

The government approved the CDA proposal for widening the road to facilitate smooth movement of vehicles on August 6 in 2008 to be completed by June 2010.

But, 10 months of the completion period of two years elapsed, due to complication over land acquisition, before CDA started implementing the project on June 4 this year.

Sources said before formation of CDA, Public Works Department (PWD) acquired land for expanding the road up to 100 feet. But, PWD rehabilitated some affected families due to construction of structures of Chittagong Medical College on some 88 kathas of land along the east side of Bayezid Bostami Road stretching from Mayorergoli to Textile Mills gate in the mid fifties.

In the meantime, CDA and PWD at a meeting reached an understanding to rehabilitate the affected families on PWD land within a month, said the sources.

"Having ten months already lost we are working round the clock and with around 40 per cent of the work done we expect to complete the project within the scheduled time of June next year," said Project Director Engineer Mahfuzur Rahman.

There would be two 24-foot lanes and a four-foot road median to be decorated with pointing work of machine-made bricks.

The road would have a 10-foot walkway and a 10-foot drain covered with slabs on each side.

The green patch would be devel-

oped beside the walkways and drains while there would be sitting arrangements at regular intervals, Mahfuz said.

Dr Monwarul Haq Shamim, a frequenter of the road, said there is no dug-out mud kept in heaps to hinder movement of pedestrians or vehicles as usually seen beside under-construction roads.

Sources at CDA said there was a condition in the tender that all the earth (approximate 11.25 lakh cft) to be dug out for the work must be removed immediately, causing no inconvenience to the public.

While talking to this correspondent CDA Chairman Abdus Salam said, "We are developing the road as a model road that would provide scope to take a stroll on the walkway and open space beside it."

"If it makes a success we would go for developing more such roads in the city," he added.

He said, "Timely implementation of the project even after loss of around one year would prove that if there are sincerity and efforts everything can be made possible."

"It would also prove that people can be served better if honest politicians are put in executive works," said the CDA chairman who is also a leader of Chittagong city Awami League.



STAR PHOTO

Women passengers suffer following suspension of Chittagong City Corporation Women Bus Service this week. The photo was taken from in front of Chittagong New Market on Monday.

the week that was

Workshop on report writing

Drishty, Chittagong organised a workshop on news report writing and on organisation at its office on Saturday.

Poet and journalist Omar Kaiser trained up the participants on report writing while Drishty President Masud Bakul and General Secretary Saif Chowdhury on organisational issues at the workshop.

Omar Kaiser in his speech said everybody should try to keep concept about all the national and international issues and think about those. He put up different aspects of news report writing.

A total of 35 members of the Drishty, an educational and cultural organisation, from different universities, colleges and schools took part in the workshop. The organisation Joint Secretary Shahidul Islam, Organising Secretary Saber Shah, Debate Secretary Afsana Toma, Reza

Chowdhury, Saifuddin Munna, Mujibur Rahman Moni and Syed Rifat Faruk were present at the workshop.

Blood donation programme held

Karnaphuli Lions Club, Leo Club and Bandhan Leo Club organised a blood donation programme at a community centre in the port city on Friday.

The programme was held in cooperation with the Bangladesh Buddha Juba Parishad, Chittagong chapter.

Former District Governor Rupam Kishore Barua, Karnaphuli Lions Club President Rokeya Haque, Region Chairperson (Headquarters) SM Shamsuddin, Region Chairperson AKM Shawkat Hasan Khan and Leo District President Mohammad Helal Uddin attended the programme.

Training on beautification held

A 45-day long training course on "Basic beautification and parlour management" began in the port city on Friday.

Chittagong Women Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CWCCI) and Police Nari Kalyan Samity (Punak), Chittagong jointly organised the training.

Punak Chittagong unit President Begum Nasima Akter Morshed was the chief guest at the inaugural ceremony at the programme with CWCCI President Monwara Hakim Ali in the chair.

Speakers at the ceremony said economic development is not possible without equal participation of men and women in all activities of the country.

They said women should engage themselves with income generating activities alongside the household work to contribute

to the family as well as the economic development of the country. Chittagong Additional Superintendent of Police Amena Begum and CWCCI Director Rekha Alam Chowdhury also spoke at the programme. CWCCI Beautification Expert and Trainer Anjuma Ara Sheikh Misti put up different aspect of the training. A total of 30 members of Punak Chittagong district unit took part in the workshop.

Concord concluded thorough a musical concert on Friday.

Popular singers Ankhi Alamgir, Roby Chowdhury, Moon and Samina enthralled the audiences with their melodious numbers at the concert.

Later, raffle draw of the festival was held.

Mobile phone operator Banglalink Regional Chief Commercial Officer Biswajit Pal, Dhaka Regency Hotel and Resort Chief Commercial Officer Mohammad Anwar, Chittagong Ambrosia Restaurant Director Shahr Ahmed, Concord Entertainment Company Limited Manager (Marketing) Farhanul K Chowdhury and Executive Director Mozaffar Ahmed were

present at the ceremony.

Later, the guests handed over prizes among the raffle draw winners.

Members of Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) seized Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) equipment worth around Tk 2.5 lakh from an apartment at city's Dev Pahar area on Sunday.

Acting on a tip off, a squad of the Rab-7, Chittagong raided the second floor of an apartment owned by one Mohammad Ismail in the Dev Pahar area under

Kotwali Police Station. Members of the elite force seized 23 tellur sets, one quintum, one UPS, one IPS and three batteries.

Rab, however, could not arrest the VoIP traders.

Registration of Nautical Institute Bangladesh and launching of Chittagong branch were celebrated through a ceremony at a local hotel here on Friday.

Shipping Secretary Masud Elahi was present as the chief

guest while Director General Commodore Bazlur Rahman and Nautical Institute, UK Chief Executive Philip Wake attended as special guests.

Philip Wake handed over the flag to Nautical Institute, Bangladesh Chairman Captain Mohammad Habibur Rahman.

Honorary Secretary of Bangladesh Branch Captain Zillur Rahman highlighted the NI activities in Bangladesh since 1992.

The guests praised the NI activities in shipping field.

Participants said green house effect already created havoc on earth while ultimately global warming and its consequences were noticeable.



STAR PHOTO



Bangladesh Upazila Parishad Association Chittagong Divisional Coordinator Mohammad Giasuddin speaks at a view exchange meeting of Chittagong division upazila chairmen, vice-chairmen and women vice-chairmen at Ladies Club on Monday.

Eid festival ends

The Eid festival that began on September 21 at Foy's Lake