

Police limp along on inadequate, worn-out vehicles

MUKHLESUR RAHMAN

Bangladesh Police, comprising some 1.24 lakh members, limps along on only 1,168 ramshackle and age-old pickup vans for regular patrols across the country, which are too inadequate and can hardly cope with the modern ones used by criminals.

The law enforcement agency has a total of 6,391 vehicles of different modes - 1,168 are pickups, 635 are jeeps and 2,508 are motorbikes. The rest are of different modes, including cars, buses and trucks, for its total 1,577 administrative units from police headquarters to 600 police stations, said police HQ sources.

Of the vehicles, 208 vehicles are used in police headquarters, 2,319 for metropolitan police, 374 for special branch (SB) and CID together, 13 for police telecom, 186 for APBN, 129 for police training centres, 23 in GRP, 19 for police staff college, 231 for highway police and 2,889 vehicles are used in the districts.

A good number of the vehicles,

including pickup vans, were procured in early 1990s and these are now almost in poor state but police personnel at different police stations have to depend on these worn-out vehicles, which result in adverse impacts on maintaining the law and order.

Contacted, Officer-in-Charge (OC) Shah Alam of Dhanmondi Police Station said: "All the vehicles in my police station remain out of order very often. To make the vehicles operative, they need frequent mechanical servicing every day."

"Of the total four vehicles, Isuzu pickup van was procured in 1992, Toyota pickup van in 1997, Toyota micro in 2006, another pickup in 1997 and Nissan double cabin pickup van in 2004."

The OC said, "While patrolling, especially at midnight, we cannot cope with criminals as they use comparatively modern and newer vehicles than those of police."

At midnights, when patrol police ask the vehicles, suspiciously roaming on highways, to halt, the criminals in

the vehicles speed away defying signals. But police vehicles cannot cope with them in the race, he added.

"I experienced many such incidents while I was on duty. We could not nab the criminals due to the mechanical faults in police vehicles used in the operations."

DMP sources said many police stations in the city run with one or two vehicles.

The police department has to bear a huge amount of money for repairing the shabby age-old vehicles every year, HQ sources said.

In 2008-2009 fiscal year, the department had to spent Tk 20.19 crore in maintaining the vehicles and Tk 100 crore as fuel cost.

The sources said the department could cut a good amount of maintenance and fuel costs by introducing new vehicles discarding age-old ones.

HQ sources said despite acute scarcity of police vehicles, almost all the vehicles are being used on duty for VIPs and the rest are for police personnel entitled to vehicles, leaving the

main task of "maintaining law and order by enforcing law" at stake.

Inspector General of Police (IGP) Nur Mohammad told reporters that they do not have sufficient number of vehicles to carry out their duties in maintaining the law and order.

The vehicles, which police have, are being used on duty for the VIPs mainly, he added.

The IGP said in the current fiscal year Tk 12.5 crore was allocated to the police department for buying vehicles, but it was insufficient.

Assistant Inspector General (equipment and transportation) Mohammad Mahbubur Rahman said on November 26 last year, police sent a proposal to the government to buy 1,500 pickup vans and 6,500 motorbikes. The procurement costs would worth Tk 500 crore.

They proposed the government to procure the vehicles by three years in phases, he added.

The headquarters sources said they are yet to receive any response from the government in this connection.



Winners of '3rd National Wall Magazine Festival and Competition' pose with guests at the award giving ceremony at Bangla Academy in the city yesterday. Bangladesh Deyal Patrika Parishad organised the event.

PHOTO: STAR



PHOTO: STAR

A mother holds her child with cleft lip at Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University Hospital in the city yesterday, the first day of a health camp. A group of international medical volunteers will operate on such children during the five-day health camp.

Free life-changing surgery for children with cleft lip

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rokeya, a six-year-old girl who rarely smiles because of a deformity in her face, was brought to Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University Hospital (BSMMUH) yesterday for a life-changing surgery.

She was born with cleft lip, which means she has a cleft in the upper lip, making it often difficult for her to eat, speak, socialise or even smile.

A group of international medical volunteers has come forward to provide free surgery to fix the cleft lip and palate of children at the hospital under the 'Operation Smile -- Bangladesh-Singapore Friendship Mission' that began yesterday.

The surgery will not only recover Rokeya's smile, it will change her life forever. After being stared and mocked by others for years, Rokeya can now finally lead a normal life.

"I am very happy," said Rokeya. Her

father Siddiq Hossain added: "It is unbelievable and I'm very proud of her. I am the happiest person on earth now."

Many shared the same emotion with Siddiq yesterday at the hospital where over 65 children with the same condition as Rokeya gathered with their parents for screening. Some 72 more children will be screened today.

Field workers of Brac identified and registered these children from Dhaka city.

A group of 12 foreign volunteers from Operation Smile, accompanied by nine members of board of trustees, including local specialists, will operate on the children selected through screening in the five-day mission in association with BSMMUH and Brac.

"More than 4,000 to 6,000 children are born with this condition a year," said Prof Dr S A Siddiqi, a trustee member at Operation Smile, Bangladesh at the inau-

gural ceremony of health screening of children at BSMMUH yesterday.

"Most parents are not aware of what should be done when their children are born with facial deformities such as cleft lip and palate. These children alienate themselves from society and may ultimately become social burdens," he said.

A group of nurses, paediatricians, anaesthesiologists, surgeons, dentists and other specialists took part in the screening process yesterday. The children selected for surgery were given an identity card and a schedule for the surgery that will take place today.

BSMMU Vice Chancellor Prof Pran Gopal Datta, Dr Shaheen Akhtar, Prof MD Moazzem Hossain, Operation Smile's Director of Singapore Dr Vincent Yeow and Chairman of Operation Smile, Bangladesh Dr Mahabubur Rahman Chowdhury also spoke.

NDC launches capstone course

UNB, Dhaka

The National Defence College (NDC) launched the Capstone Course-1 yesterday.

Finance Minister Abul Maal Abdul Muhith inaugurated the course as the chief guest.

A total of 16 participants, including two judges, seven lawmakers, three Major General equivalent officers, two editors of national dailies and two eminent businessmen are taking part in the course.

The main objective of the course is to provide overall practical knowledge on the national security and development.

Earlier, on his arrival at NDC at Mirpur cantonment, the finance minister was received by NDC Commandant Maj Gen AKM Muzahid Uddin.

High military, civil officers and prominent personalities were also present, said an ISPR release.

Build character with moral values to fight graft

Speakers urge children

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at an award giving ceremony yesterday called on the children as well as youths to build their character with moral values to make the country free from corruption and poverty.

The children and youths of today will take the country's leadership tomorrow. They should learn moral lessons to build their character with ethics to fight corruption, they added.

They said this at the award giving ceremony of '3rd National Wall Magazine Festival and Competition' organised by Bangladesh Deyal Patrika Parishad (wall magazine council) at Bangla Academy.

Speaking as the chief guest, Prof Mustafa Nurul Islam stressed the need for creating

a congenial atmosphere for children so that they can practise freethinking.

Advocate Sultana Kamal, former adviser to a caretaker government, called on the children to take an oath to fight corruption in their future professional life.

She also suggested them to vote for honest and dedicated politicians when they will become voters.

Prof Serajul Islam Chowdhury said, "Even after 38 years of our liberation war, the people of the country cannot have the fruit of the freedom, as the path of practising freethinking and creativity was always choked."

"Lack of efficient leadership is the major cause of ensuring real freedom of the countrymen," he added.

He also pointed out that

rising of militancy and fundamentalism is retarding the way of strengthening the nascent democracy in the country.

Manjurul Ahsan Bulbul, former president of Bangladesh Federal Union of Journalists, and Motahar Akand, general secretary of the parishad, also spoke at the function.

The competition began on January 15 with the participation of some 300 secondary-level students from 104 schools across the country.

A total of 10 schools were awarded for their outstanding performance. Saint Gregory's High School took the first position. The first award-winning school got Tk 20,000, the 2nd got Tk 10,000 while the 3rd winner got Tk 5,000 and other winners got Tk 2,000 each.

Career Opportunity

The Premier Bank limited, one of the most dynamic commercial banks in the country providing caring and customer friendly financial services to the country is looking for some **Support Officer to the Chairman of the Board of Directors and for Senior Management.**

Job Responsibilities:

- Organize and maintain Chairman/Senior Management's office so that day to day function runs smoothly.
- Prepare reports, maintain documents, correspondence in systematic manner.
- Follow up all assignment given by seniors with the deadline to accelerate the work.
- Manage travel itineraries, schedule.

Requirements:

- Masters in any discipline (English & IR will be preferred).
- At least 3 (three) years experience in related field.
- Diploma/Training in Secretarial Science will be an added advantage.
- Proficiency in English and Bengali.
- Smart, good interpersonal relationship, capable to work independently.
- Good computer skills especially in windows, MS word, MS Excel, Power Point and Internet.
- Age should not exceed 35 years.

Salary and Designation will depend on the experience and background of the selected candidates.

Please send your resume along with a recent passport size color photograph, contact phone numbers to the Head of Human Resource Division at the following address within 31st January 2010. You may also apply online by accessing our website-www.premierbankltd.com

The Premier Bank Limited
Head Office, Iqbal Centre, 14th floor
42, Kemal Ataturk Avenue, Banani, Dhaka.
Tel: 9887581-4, Fax : 8815393

Premier Bank
service first

READERS' CIRCLE
Bishwa Sahitya Kendra invites applications for being fellows

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bishwa Sahitya Kendra invites applications for being fellows of its Readers' Circle 2010, says a press release.

During the yearlong programme, the fellows will explore some 40 books of literature, anthropology, philosophy and history.

Each Friday, there will be a discussion on a selected book.

Prof Abdullah Abu Sayeed will conduct the readers' circle while renowned academics, litterateurs and cultural activists will also participate.

The fellows will also get the opportunity to watch movies and plays and travel to important places.

Interested people have been requested to contact the library of the Kendra by January 31 with two copies of passport size photographs.

To become a fellow of this circle, one has to complete minimum the higher secondary level.

We cover Europe with 16 destinations.

Welcome to Europe.

From Stockholm to Istanbul, take in a phenomenal diversity of peoples and cultures. Discover Europe on Qatar Airways: travel via Doha to experience sixteen amazing destinations. So fly with us on your next journey. After all, we cover the world with over 80 destinations.

World's 5-star airline. qatarairways.com

Athens	Milan
Berlin	Moscow
Frankfurt	Munich
Geneva	Paris
Istanbul	Rome
London	Stockholm
Madrid	Vienna
Manchester	Zurich

Launching 2010
Barcelona, Copenhagen

QATAR AIRWAYS
الخطوط القطرية

Dhaka: (88-02) 9890024-5/8858781 • Dilkusha: (88-02) 9556538/9556491
Chittagong: (88-031) 2512001-2 • Sylhet: (880-821) 719838/2832617