

Remove unfit vehicles from city streets: PM

Directive to introduce BRTC bus service for city's educational institutions

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday ordered removal of the unfit buses and other vehicles from the city streets to protect the environment and ease traffic congestion.

She was addressing a function marking the inauguration of 100 CNG-run BRTC single-decker buses at the Bashar Base of the Old Airport in the morning.

Hasina also directed the authorities concerned to take initiatives to introduce specific BRTC bus services for the city's educational institutions, especially schools, and banks to provide the city dwellers with comfortable and timely transport facilities.

She said: "Formulate policies and guidelines to arrange buses for schools, colleges, banks and other institutions. We want to facilitate the city dwellers with smooth, timely and comfortable public transport."

About her plan for introducing BRTC bus services on a massive scale, she said a modern bus service can be introduced for all educational institutions.

"If the BRTC buses move around the city everyday and take passengers from the schools and colleges at a certain time from morning to evening, then the students and teachers will not feel it necessary to use their private cars," she said.

She said the government will provide at least two buses for each of the colleges in the capital. She further disclosed that the government will procure 600 more new buses.

Hasina said the government wants to intro-



PHOTO: STAR

One of the 100 CNG-run BRTC single-decker buses introduced in the city yesterday.

duce a strong and modern public transport system in the country, particularly for the city dwellers.

She noted that in most developed countries, public transport systems are very strong and provide outstanding service to their citizens.

Sympathising with the common people of the capital for the suffering they face trying to get into public buses during rush hours, Hasina said the government's priority is to provide fast and smooth transport facilities for the masses.

"Most of the city dwellers do not have their

own cars. So we want to provide them with modern bus services so that they can travel comfortably and timely," she said.

She expressed her deep empathy with city dwellers who have to wait for hours just to catch buses every morning.

"We want to build the capital as a pollution- and congestion-free city," she said.

Referring to the losses incurred by BRTC and other government services, Hasina said all projects and services can be profitable if corruption is rooted out and management runs its affairs as per the rules and regulations.

"However, in the case of public services, profit or loss should not be the prime concern. Rather people's interests and comforts must be given the top priority," she said.

She said many drivers of buses and other vehicles do not follow the traffic rules contributing to serious traffic jams on the streets.

She ordered the traffic police to strictly implement the traffic rules and take stern action against the violators.

Hasina reiterated her commitment to reform the railway services and introduce commuter train services between Dhaka and its adjacent districts, the elevated express way, underground subway, flyovers, ring-roads and waterways to modernise the transport system across the country, including the capital.

Communications Minister Syed Abul Hossain and BRTC Chairman MM Iqbal Khan CPP also spoke at the function with Communications Secretary Mozammel Haque Khan in the chair.

Coal-based power plants stressed

Minister admits failure in addressing power crisis

UNB, Dhaka

Industries Minister Dilip Barua has admitted that the government could not fulfil the "people's expectations" regarding a solution to the power crisis.

"Unfortunately we couldn't address the power crisis quickly as expected by the countrymen. It's simply because there has never been a long-term, realistic policy on power generation," he said this while he was addressing a pre-budget discussion at the National Press Club yesterday.

Barua, however, assured the people that the government would solve the power crisis through implementation of its short, mid and long-term plans,

and sought time from the people to ensure a country free from loadshedding.

Economic Reporters Development Foundation (ERDF) organised the discussion. President of Bangladesh-Malaysia Chamber of Commerce and Industries (BMCCI) Syed Moazzem Hossain, former president of Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industries MA Momen, industrialist Sheikh Masudul Islam Masud and journalist Jibon Islam spoke at the discussion.

Contemplating a long-term solution to the power crisis, Barua said: "It's time to go for coal-based power plants. We have world's best quality coal."

5 projects worth Tk 1250cr okayed

Single point mooring to be set up in deep sea for direct intake of petroleum by Eastern Refinery

UNB, Dhaka

Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (Ecneec) yesterday approved five projects worth Tk 1250 crore.

The Ecneec approved the projects at its meeting at the Planning Commission in the afternoon with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in the chair.

Of the five projects approved, one is the installation of a single point mooring (SPM) in deep sea to facilitate direct petroleum transportation from ships to a refinery near Chittagong port through underground pipeline.

Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation (BPC) will implement the project at a total estimated cost of Tk 954 crore, of which Tk 904 crore will be financed by the Islamic Development Bank (IDB). The remaining

amount will come from the BPC's own fund and from the government.

According to the project profile, the SPM will be installed at Kutubdia of the Bay of Bengal. A 77km 36-inch pipeline will be built from the SPM to the state-owned Eastern Refinery in Chittagong port area.

After the installation of the SPM, the huge petroleum-carrier ships will be able to offload fuel directly to the pipeline to take the same to the Eastern Refinery.

But under the current arrangement, big ships usually anchor at deep sea from where lighter vessels receive the imported crude and refined petroleum to carry to the Eastern Refinery with the whole process taking 12 to 15 days.

"But when the SPM will be set up with underground pipeline, it will take just 24

to 48 hours," Planning Secretary Habubullah Majumder told reporters.

At present, the country imports 3.8-4.0 million crude and refined petroleum fuel to meet the annual demands. This import is expected to rise significantly when a number of fuel-fired power plants will be set up in a couple of years.

The other four projects approved by the Ecneec include South Asia Tourism Infrastructure Development Project (Tk 58 crore), setting up of Sheikh Fazilatunnesa Mujib Eye Hospital and Training Institute at Gopalganj (Tk 141 crore), setting up of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Safari Park at Gazipur (Tk 64 crore) and construction of a by-lane of Soidabad-Enayetpur (Khaja Yunus Ali Medical College Hospital) Road (Tk 33 crore).

Partial water transport strike continues

Minister warns of tougher action against strikers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The indefinite water transport strike was observed partially yesterday, the fourth day of the country strike enforced by Bangladesh Nouran Sramik Federation.

Meanwhile, Shipping Minister Shahjahan Khan termed the strike a conspiracy against the government and warned of tougher action against those involved.

The strike has been causing huge suffering to passengers. The number of passengers who came to the Sadarghat launch terminal in the city yesterday was higher than any other days during the strike.

Twenty-six launches left the Sadarghat terminal while 23 other launches anchored there yesterday, said a source at the senior deputy director's (traffic) office of Sadarghat launch terminal.

Talking to The Daily Star, Badiuzzaman Badal, senior vice-president of Bangladesh Inland Waterways (passenger carriers) Association, said they were operating launches regularly and the numbers of passengers are increasing day by day.

The leaders and activists of Nouran Sramik Federation yesterday expressed their determination to continue the strike until the unconditional release of the federation leaders.

Addressing a press conference at Dhaka Reporters' Unity yesterday, they made the announcement and called for prime minister's intervention in resolving the deadlock.

A total of 11 leaders and activists of the federation, including its senior vice president Shah Alam, were arrested on charges of vandalism of the office of Bangladesh Nouran Sramik League and creating chaos in front of Sadarghat launch terminal on Saturday.

The police arrested two more members of the federation in this case from the Sadarghat area at around 9:00am yesterday. They are Taher, 30, and Monir Hossain, 40.

Meanwhile, a Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Court yesterday granted one-day remand for Shah Alam after the police appealed for a four-day remand.

The federation enforced the strike on Friday night to press their demand for pay hike.

Our Chittagong correspondent reports: Shipping Minister Shahjahan Khan at a view exchange meeting in Chittagong yesterday called on the inland water transport owners and anti-strike workers to unite against "illegal and partial strike" enforced by a section of workers.

He also warned of tougher action against those involved in the strike.

A total of 23 vessels remained stranded at the outer anchorage of Chittagong port due to the strike.

Our Barisal Correspondent reports: Seven launches left the terminals for Bhola, Charkalmi and Patarhat, while one launch left for Dhaka.



PHOTO: STAR

Several launches leave Sadarghat Launch Terminal in the city yesterday, although Bangladesh Nouran Sramik Federation have been enforcing an indefinite water transport strike since Friday night.

KHALEDA'S WHITE MONEY

AL seeks explanation from BNP

BSS, Dhaka

Awami League acting general secretary Mahbub ul Alam Hanif yesterday demanded an explanation from the BNP leaders as to how white money can be transformed into white.

At a press conference at the office of the AL president, he raised a question as to why fines were realised when white money of Khaleda Zia were made white.

Hanif alleged that Khaleda legalised her undisclosed money earned through corruption. She paid fines and tax to make black money white, which were looted during the four-party alliance period, he added.

Hanif also said that whatever may be the source, black money is not a legal income.

Anybody can be owner of black money earned through bribes, corruption, black marketing and misappropriation of state funds, he added.

To avoid case and punishment, Khaleda legalised a part of her hidden income during the caretaker government, which tarnished the country's image, Hanif said, adding that they should make apology to the nation for it.

Countering a statement of Advocate Ahmed Azam Khan, Hanif asked how Khaleda discharged the duty of a prime minister, if she could not understand the matter of paying income tax.

INFORMAL SECTOR WORKERS

'Ensure social security'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The issue of social security of around four crore workers in informal sector needs to be addressed in the national budget, experts at a view exchange meeting said yesterday.

Describing social security as human security, economist Prof Muzaffer Ahmad said economic growth cannot be sustainable without giving recognition to the labour force in the informal sector.

Nagorik Udyog and Partnership of Women in Action (PaWa) jointly organised the view exchange meeting on 'Social security and informal sector' at the National Press Club in the city.

The workers in informal

sector account for about 80 percent of the total labour force of five crore in the country, said Zakir Hossain, chief executive of Nagorik Udyog, while presenting the keynote paper.

Quoting surveys, he said some 44.70 percent of the total labor force are self-employed and 20.29 percent are day-laborers. So, the state should pay more attention to the education, health, shelter, water and sanitation facilities for them who are keeping the economy going.

"Informal sectors are also helping formal sectors to sustain in many ways. Studies showed that only women workers in informal sector creates a market of products worth over Tk 15000 crore a year," he added.

Fake doctor jailed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A mobile court of Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) yesterday sentenced a person to one year's imprisonment and sent him to jail on charge of treating patients using fake identity as a doctor.

The court arrested Nur Nabi as it found him to treat patients at Crescent Hospital and Diagnostic Complex at Babar Road in Mohammadpur.

He is one of the owners of the hospital, where he also treats patients as a specialist of gout, pain and orthopedics, as per his visiting card.

Soon after the arrest Nur Nabi claimed to the magistrate that he did a course on physiotherapy from National Institute of Traumatology Orthopedics and Rehabilitation (NITOR) (Pongu Hospital) but he hasn't any recognised certificate to practice as doctor.

Rab officials said Nur Nabi had been treating patients for a long time without having the registration of Bangladesh Medical and Dental Council (BMDC).

Citi Foundation

Citi Microentrepreneurship Awards 2009
সিটি ক্ষুদ্র উদ্যোক্তা পুরস্কার ২০০৯

আপনার স্বীকৃতি আমাদের সুখ
বিশ্বমারো বাংলার মুখ

যে ৪টি বিভাগে এক ফেসব বিবেচনায় এ পুরস্কার দেয়া হবে তা নিম্নে উল্লেখ করা হলো:

- ১। 'বছরের শ্রেষ্ঠ কৃষি উদ্যোক্তা'
- ২। 'বছরের শ্রেষ্ঠ ক্ষুদ্র উদ্যোক্তা'
- ৩। 'বছরের শ্রেষ্ঠ মহিলা ক্ষুদ্র উদ্যোক্তা'
- ৪। 'বছরের শ্রেষ্ঠ ক্ষুদ্র ঋণ প্রদানকারী সংস্থা'

কৃষি খাতে নৃদাত হাণ্ডলারকরী উদ্যোগ, ক্ষুদ্র ঋণ ব্যবহারের অভিজ্ঞতা, সৃজনশীলতা / উদ্ভাবনী কৌশল, উৎসাহিত পণ্য বা উদ্যোগের ধরণ, পণ্যের রক্তনীর সম্ভাবনা।

নৃদাত হাণ্ডলারকরী কোন উদ্যোগ, ক্ষুদ্র ঋণ ব্যবহারের অভিজ্ঞতা, উদ্যোগের সম্ভাব সম্প্রসারণ ও প্রসুতি, উৎসাহিত শীলতা, নিয়োজিত কর্মীর সংখ্যা।

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আগ্রহী ক্ষুদ্র উদ্যোক্তাগণকে তাদের নিজ নিজ এলাকার জেলা প্রশাসক অথবা ক্ষুদ্র ঋণ প্রদানকারী সংস্থার সঙ্গে যোগাযোগ করতে এক ক্ষুদ্র ঋণ প্রদানকারী সংস্থাকে সারসরি আবেদন করতে পরামর্শ দেয়া যাচ্ছে (ক্ষুদ্র উদ্যোক্তা কোন ক্ষুদ্র ঋণ প্রদানকারী সংস্থার বর্তমান ঋণগ্রহীতা না হলেও চলবে)। সকল ক্ষুদ্র ঋণ প্রদানকারী সংস্থাকে তাদের এক তাদের আওতাধীন ক্ষুদ্র উদ্যোক্তাদের আবেদন / মনোনয়ন নিম্নলিখিত ঠিকানায় (আবেদন পত্রের মাধ্যমে) প্রেরণের অনুরোধ করা হলো।

আগ্রহী ব্যক্তি ও প্রতিষ্ঠান সমূহের অনুরোধের পরিশ্রান্তিত মনোনয়ন পাঠানোর শেষ তারিখ ২০ মে, ২০১০ পর্যন্ত বর্ধিত করা হয়েছে।

মোজেন আহমেদ চৌধুরী
শক্তি ফাউন্ডেশন ফর ডিজিটাল এন্টারপ্রাইজ উইথিন
ঠিকানাঃ বাড়ী - ৪৪, সড়ক - ২/এ, ধানমন্ডি আ/এ, ঢাকা-১২০৯
ফোনঃ ৯৬৬ ১২২২, ৯৬৭ ৬৯৫২, ০১৮১৮ ২২২ ৯৮৩, ০১৮১৭ ০০১ ৪৬১
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প্রত্যেক ক্ষুদ্র ঋণ প্রদানকারী সংস্থা সর্বোচ্চ ৪টি (নিজ ক্ষুদ্র ঋণ প্রদানকারী সংস্থার জন্য ১টি এক অন্য ৩টি শ্রেণীতে ১টি করে মোট ৩টি) মনোনয়ন করতে পারেন। প্রত্যেক জেলা প্রশাসক ক্ষুদ্র ঋণ প্রদানকারী সংস্থা ছাড়া অন্য ৩টি শ্রেণীতে ২টি করে মোট ৬টি মনোনয়ন প্রদান করতে পারেন। আবেদনপত্রের জন্য নিম্নলিখিত ওয়েবসাইট দেখুন অথবা উপরে উল্লেখিত ঠিকানায় যোগাযোগ করুন।
<http://www.sfdw.org/cma2009.html> এক <http://www.asia.citibank.com/bangladesh/corporate>