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Target fakes, unfits

Govt launches drive on July 15 against 1 lakh unfit vehicles, 4 lakh fake licence-holders

M ABUL KALAM AZAD

The government will launch a drive in the capital from July 15 against one lakh unfit and old vehicles and around four lakh drivers using fake licence to reduce road accidents.

A total of 15 mobile courts, each headed by an executive magistrate, will clamp down on 20-year-old buses and minibuses and 25-year-old trucks and vans and other unauthorised vehicles.

The decision came at a meeting at the communication ministry on authorising mobile courts to take action against date expired and illegal vehicles in Dhaka city. Communications Minister Syed Abul Hossain chaired the meeting.

However, no guideline came from the meeting on what to do with four lakh drivers with fake licence.

The drive will continue until further notice.

All the 15 mobile courts will start the drive together but they will later split into two groups and carry on the operation four days a week -- Sunday, Monday,

FEARSOME FACTS

Heavy vehicles (Dhaka facts)

	Fit	Unfit
Bus	6,770	1,446
Truck	21,890	8,125
Minibus	5,952	2,365

Driving licence (country facts)

	Valid	Fake
	9 lakh	4.4 lakh

Vehicles in Dhaka 527,285

Vehicles in country 13,43,719

Wednesday and Thursday.

Leaders of different transport owners' associations were present at the meeting and assured the communication minister of extending full cooperation to the mobile courts to make the drive a success.

"We will not spare any old or unauthorised vehicles," Abul Hossain told the meeting, urging the transport owners not to lobby when the mobile courts seize their vehicles.

The meeting accepted the owners' proposal of allowing inter-district buses and goods-laden trucks and vans pass through the capital between midnight and 5:00am.

However, it turned down their plea to delay the drive by one week.

"We do not want to see vehicles without fitness and route permit ply the city roads. But the problem is that 80 percent of the driver's licence is fake," said Khandaker Enayet Hossain, secretary general of Dhaka Sarak and Paribahan Owners' Association.

He apprehended that at least 20 percent vehicles would remain off the roads due to shortage of drivers. He proposed launching similar drives in the suburbs of Dhaka where the old and unauthorised vehicles are usually transferred.

Chairman of Bangladesh Road Transport Authority Ayubur Rahman Khan also identified fake licence as one of the main problems in transport sector. He said many a group is involved in making fake driver's licence.

Communications Secretary

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Australia gets first woman PM

Kevin Rudd quits after party coup

AFP, Canberra

Welsh-born lawyer Julia Gillard became Australia's first woman prime minister yesterday after the once hugely popular Kevin Rudd fell to a party coup less than three years after taking office.

The tough, flame-haired Julia was elected unopposed in a shock Labor Party ballot called just hours earlier, saying she could not "sit idly by"

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UN adds Yunus to anti-poverty effort

Ban names group to advance UN's Millennium Development Goals bid

AFP, United Nations

UN chief Ban Ki-moon named a high-profile committee Wednesday aimed at sparking progress against poverty and toward improved welfare under the organization's Millennium Development Goals.

The group will be led by co-chairs President Paul Kagame of Rwanda and Prime Minister Jose Luis Rodriguez Zapatero of Spain.

Others in the group include Nobel laureate Muhammad Yunus of Bangladesh, former Chilean president Michelle Bachelet, Microsoft founder Bill Gates, CNN founder Ted Turner and Jeffrey Sachs of The Earth Institute and a professor at Columbia University.

Ban said "distinguished" personalities from China, India, Japan and Britain will also join the panel.

"As you can see, (this is) a real collection of superheroes in defeating poverty," the UN secretary general said.



Muhammad Yunus

The group will push for progress in the Millennium goals stemming from a 2000 summit, which call for reducing extreme poverty by half by 2015.

The MDG Advocacy Group will bring together "some of the world's leading thinkers and doers," Ban added as the UN prepared for a new summit in September.

"We need to emerge from the September Millennium Development Goals Summit with concrete national action plans for realizing the goals," he said.

"These advocates can help get us there. They will help generate political will and mobilize a global grassroots movement to meet the MDGs."

The UN set a 15-year timeframe at the turn of the millennium to achieve its goals of halving extreme poverty, boosting health and education and further empowering women across the developing world.

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PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ

Toxic liquid from a dyeing factory at Godnail, Narayanganj falls into a canal linked to the river Shitalakkhya. The photo was taken on Wednesday.

Car crash hurts ex-Indian speaker's wife in Moulvibazar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Former speaker of Indian Lok Sabha PA Sangma, his wife Soradini K Sangma and other delegates got into a road crash at Munshinagar in Moulvibazar yesterday as their car hit a security vehicle from behind.

Soradini and former member of Indian Rajya Sabha BB Dutta were injured in the accident. Police sent them to North East Medical College Hospital in Sylhet.

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WAR CRIMES TRIAL Qamrul to oversee progress

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

State Minister for Law Qamrul Islam will oversee the daily progress in the trial process of the '1971 crimes against humanity', as an investigation into the crimes is going on.

Qamrul was entrusted with the task at a meeting of the investigators and prosecutors of war crimes tribunal with Law Minister Shafique Ahmed in the chair.

Home Minister Sahara Khatun, State Minister for Home Affairs Shamsul Huq

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Prayer Timing		
June 25		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-05	4-40
Juma	12-15	1-15
Asr	5-00	5-15
Maghrib	6-52	6-55
Esha	8-17	8-45

Source: Islamic Foundation

MUKTIJODDHA COUNCIL HC clears way for election

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday cleared an obstacle to holding the election of Muktiyoddha Sangsad Command Council (MSCC) on June 26.

A vacation HC bench of Justice Moyeenul Islam Chowdhury and Justice AKM Abdul Hakim summarily rejected a writ petition that challenged the formation of a

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Waterbus service from August

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Waterbus service will be launched in August to carry passengers through the rivers surrounding the capital to ease horrific traffic congestion in the city, Shipping Minister Shajahan Khan told parliament yesterday.

Participating in the discussion on the proposed budget for next fiscal year, he said the government has taken various measures to restore the tradition of carrying passengers and goods through riverways.

The minister however did not elaborate on the waterbus service.

He mentioned the much lower cost of carrying goods through waterways compared to railways and roads, and said, "Therefore we are working to improve waterway communications."

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OnlinePoll

Speakers at a workshop on civil-military relations have sought more transparency in army spending. Do you support this?

☐ Yes (84.40%)
☐ No (14.51%)
☐ No Comments (1.09%)

Total votes: 641

TODAY'S POLL

Do you think the government will be able to implement its decision of removing unfit and old buses, trucks and vans from the streets from July 15 in order to ease traffic jam?

Please cast your vote at www.thedailystar.net

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5th prize: Huawei C2007 Handset with prepaid connection

Contest Rules and Regulations:

- Type REG and send to 1412 to participate in the SMS contest. In return you will receive 1st question.
- Type 'Y' if your answer is YES; or 'N' if your answer is NO and send to 1412. Subsequently you will get next question.
- Winners will be selected based on highest point.
- Type 'POINT' and send to 1412 to know your position and point.
- Contest ends on 4 July, 2010, 23:59:59 hrs.

* SMS charges applicable * Conditions Apply

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