

SADARGHAT LAUNCH TERMINAL Stern action if passengers harassed

Warns minister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Stern action would be taken against water transport workers if they harass passengers, said Shipping Minister Shajahan Khan yesterday.

The minister said this after inaugurating a new system of handling workforce at Sadarghat Launch Terminal.

On the new system, selected workers will have to register with the Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority (BIWTA) and renew it every year, he said. Only those workers would be allowed to work at the terminal.

"We have pledged to ensure maximum facilities to the passengers. You should put your best efforts to serve the passengers properly," he said.

He said the new system would cut down BIWTA earnings but would certainly minimise passenger harassment.

Different leaseholders owe BIWTA Tk 4 crore, which has accumulated over the last few years, he added.

Asked on how this money would be realised, the minister said he would use legal procedures.

The terminal took a new look yesterday, with no hawkers, temporary shops or gathering of workers.

Meanwhile, a section of workers of Bangladesh Nought Sramik League led by its president Abdul Jalil Hawlader demonstrated, demanding their appointment.

They blamed the minister and BIWTA chairman Abdul Malek Miah of appointing 100 workers of their personal choice and through underhand dealings depriving the regular workers. The minister assured them of resolving the problem within two or three days.

He also urged the passengers to place their allegations, if any, in boxes that have been placed at the terminal.

Abdul Malek Miah, BIWTA secretary Monwar Hossain, Shipping Secretary Abdul Mannan Hawlader and representatives of different workers' organisations were present.



PHOTO: STAR

Taslima Begum bursts into tears after seeing the body of her husband Md Mizanur Rahman, owner of electronic goods shop Liza Sound System, at Dhaka Medical College morgue in the city yesterday. (Story on Page 16)

61 killed in 'crossfire' in 6 months Say rights groups

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Some 1,310 people were killed in work related accidents while 61 killed in "crossfire" incidents in the last six months, says two rights organisations.

Another organisation says a total of 574 people were killed in various accidents, including road crash and building collapse.

The three organisations--Ain o Salih Kendra (ASK), Bangladesh Occupational

Safety, Health and Environment Foundation (Oshe) and Bangladesh Society for the Enforcement of Human Rights (BSEHR)-- have prepared the statistics based on the reports published in different dailies.

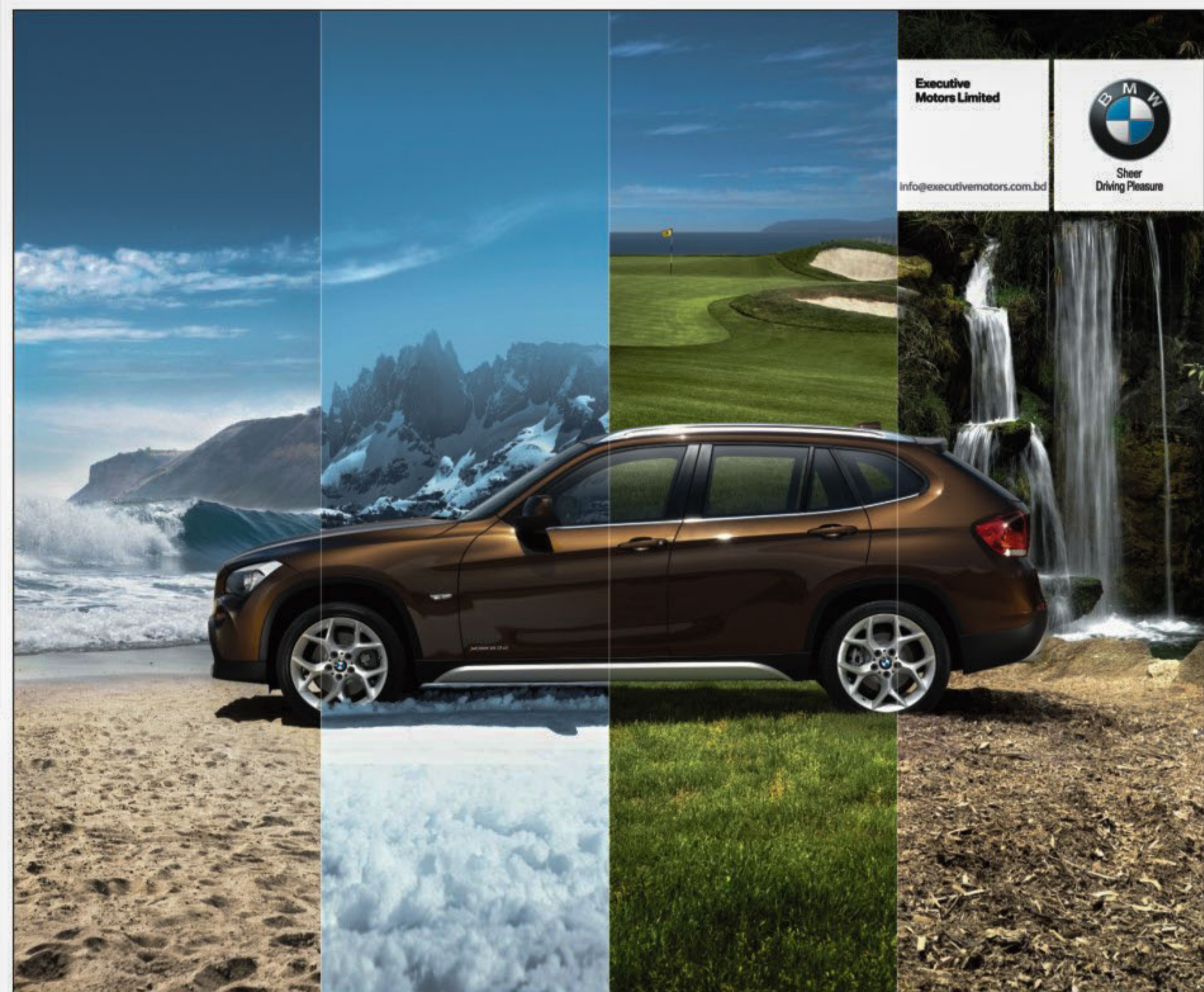
ASK in its report says of the 61 people killed by law enforcers, 26 were killed by Rab while 13 by police during January-June period.

Some 41 people also died in custody and 22 women died due to stalking

across the country during the period, it says.

Meanwhile, the Oshe report says of the total deaths in workplaces, 628 workers were killed in transport sector while 202 in agriculture and fishing, 184 day labourers and 110 in construction sector.

However, the BSEHR report says that some 256 people were killed in road accidents while 23 in building collapse, 118 in Nimtoli inferno, 58 in Chittagong landslide and 119 in other accidents.



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