



A mobile court seizes a huge quantity of substandard seeds raiding the store at Chandibazar in Bogra town yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

Smart card on the cards in road transportation, says minister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government will introduce "smart card" in road transportation to increase quality service to passengers, the communications minister said at the parliament yesterday.

Syed Abul Hossain said his ministry has planned the introduction of the card system through Bangladesh Road Transport Corporation (BRTC). The minister said smart card system would save passengers' time, but he did not give further details about it.

According to websites, smart card operates as a pre-paid card system for the purchase of mainly bus and train tickets, relieving commuters

from queuing for tickets.

Replying to lawmakers' query, the minister informed parliament that implementation works for electric train service in Dhaka-Chittagong railway corridor will kick off once the funding agreement is signed.

"The government has planned to introduce electric train service in Dhaka-Chittagong railway corridor. It will cost Tk 7,996 crore in all to introduce electric traction in the Dhaka-Chittagong railway corridor," said Hossain.

Of the cost, Tk 6,140 crore is needed as foreign assistance and a preliminary development project proforma or proposal since the aided

projects were sent to the planning commission in December, 2009 for approval," he added.

The communications minister claimed that no bus, truck, lorry or pick-up vans of 25 to 30 years old are plying the city roads presently.

In a reply, he said mobile courts have seized some 27 buses from the city since July 2010 and those vehicles have been sent to dumping station.

About identifying drivers and helpers responsible for road accidents, the minister said the government is actively considering that the drivers are made bound to display their photographs and names in their respective vehicles.

Hossain in a response on recruiting third and fourth-class employees of Bangladesh Railway said that efforts have been taken to recruit 7,275 vacant posts by this year.

On grabbing railway lands, he said different government, semi-government, and autonomous bodies have grabbed 1,254 acres of railway land while different non-government organisations and individuals have grabbed 3,356 acres of land.

"With the help of deputy commissioners and police force concerned, railway officials are taking actions to recover the lands from the grabbers," he added.

52,000kg of substandard seeds seized

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Bogra

A mobile court seized about 52,000kg of substandard seeds of paddy, jute, and mustard from a store of an agriculture seed agency in the district town of Bogra yesterday.

It also sentenced Hafizur Rahman, proprietor of the agency Master Beez Vanda at Chandibazar, to one month in jail for producing and storing the seeds for marketing.

Bogra Sadar Upazila Nirbahi Officer Mohammad Anwar Hossain led the mobile court and seized more than 600 sacks of seeds from the store.

Habibul Haque, the upazila's agricultural extension officer, said the agency owner alone processed the seeds and sealed the sacks with name tags of different foreign companies.

WOMEN DEVELOPMENT POLICY PM unhappy over role of women's organisations

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday criticised the women organisations for not playing their "due role" on the national women development policy.

"I did not see any desired role from you when vested quarters were on the field to oppose the women development policy," she said when a delegation of Samajik Protirodh Committee led by Dr Fouzia Khan met her at the Prime Minister's Office.

The premier said the women organisations were seen sitting idle when the government formulated the women development policy for the welfare of the women.

Sheikh Hasina asked the women leaders to meet the leader of the opposition and gain her support on the women development policy

"The government is trying its level best to upgrade the status of the women but you

did not step forward," she told the delegation.

Sheikh Hasina asked the women leaders to meet the opposition leader and gain her support on the issue.

"It seems to me the opposition leader is against the women policy. If not, why she did not hold meeting with the people who are strongly against the women policy," she said.

The premier said the nation cannot develop to an expected level ignoring the huge number of women.

She said her government has undertaken several steps to build women leadership from grassroots level to enhance their empowerment.

Contribution of Pritilata recalled

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a discussion yesterday demanded celebration of all the important days during the anti-British movement with state recognition.

They demanded sculptures and monuments in the name of the revolutionaries during the anti-British movement and naming of educational institutions, roads and bridges after them.

The demands came at a discussion observing the 100th birth anniversary of Pritilata Waddadar at Teacher-Student Centre Auditorium of Dhaka University.

Pritilata Janmashatabarsha Udjapon Parshad organised the discussion.

"We should not just keep our focus on the war of liberation as a time when we faced oppression. Our nation has faced oppression even before the liberation war during British reign," said Mujahidul Islam Selim, general secretary of Communist Party of Bangladesh.

"In the present context, the examples set by Pritilata Waddadar so many years ago is very much relevant," he said.

Writer Selina Hossain said calling Pritilata a revolutionary woman would be an understatement.

"She is a power, and an ideal for every woman," she said.

"These days, if any young woman makes it to the army, we feel proud and pompous. But back in 1931, such a young lady became a member of the Indian Republic Army. That was a huge achievement."

Cultural personality Kamal Lohani chaired the programme while Professor Biswajit Ghosh presented the keynote paper.

'Shift chemical warehouses from residential areas'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A group of environmental activists yesterday expressed grave concern over the reluctance of businesspersons to shift warehouses of combustible chemicals from residential area in the capital.

Recalling the memories of the last year's tragic inferno at Nimtoli in Old Dhaka, they said over one hundred people were killed and several hundreds injured in the Nimtoli blaze that had intensified by the highly inflammable chemicals.

It is unfortunate that many businessmen did not shift the depots of highly inflammable chemicals from the residential areas, including from Old Dhaka and other parts of the city though they were asked to shift the warehouses by September 30 last year following the Nimtoli tragedy, they observed.

The environmentalists made the remarks at a human chain organised for marking the 1st anniversary

of Nimtoli blaze. Poribesh Bachao Andolan (PBA) and Nagorbashi Sangathan jointly organised the event at Nimtoli.

The discussants strongly criticised the government, as it did not take effective punitive action against those businesspersons who did not relocate their chemical establishments.

Abu Naser Khan, chairman of PBA, said trading of "banned" chemicals and storing those have been going on in the residential areas, including in Old Dhaka even the city

dwellers witnessed a devastating blaze in Nimtoli last year.

The environmental activists from the human chain demanded stopping storing, trading and production of chemicals in the residential area, formulating policy about storing, trading and production of chemicals and shifting of warehouses and factories of chemical from the residential area.

Environmental workers Ansar Ali, Nazim Uddin, Atiq Morshed, Mozammel Haque Palash, among others, joined the human-chain.



Poribesh Bachao Andolan (Poba) forms a human chain at Nimtoli in Old Dhaka yesterday demanding removal of warehouses of combustible chemical from residential areas.

PHOTO: STAR

Cuta team meets PM

UNB, Dhaka

The newly elected office bearers of Chittagong University Teachers' Association (Cuta) led by Prof Ruhul Amin paid a courtesy call on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at her office in the city yesterday.

Hasina told the teachers that the government is planning to give tax rebate on the money to be donated for educational institutions.

PM's Adviser Dr Alaiddin Ahmed was present during the meeting.

ENDOCRINOLOGIST FROM QUEEN'S HOSPITAL, ENGLAND

Dr. Belayet Hossain MRCP UK, a renowned Endocrinologist from Queen's Hospital, England will be available for consultations for a short period. He will be seeing the patients with these following problems for such as; pituitary, thyroid, hypercalcaemia, hypernatremia, adrenal, Diabetes, ED, and over weight.

Please contact: Patient Care Hospital, 30 Sonargaon Janapath, Uttara, Dhaka.

Phone: 8921021, **Mobile :** 01924491420, 01675011080, 01918749420