

ROADS IN CAPITAL Freeing from occupiers demanded

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Nearly a quarter of the roads in the capital are occupied by materials for under-construction buildings and flyovers, hawkers, and parked cars, resulting in an intense traffic jam across the city, said speakers yesterday at a human chain.

Passenger Welfare Association of Bangladesh organised the human chain before Jatiya Press Club with a demand for protecting the roads and footpaths from illegal occupations.

Since around 60 percent of the footpaths remain choked, people often have to walk on roads, intensifying traffic congestion, said Sharif Rafiquzzaman, chairman of the association.

Prof Anu Muhammad stressed that the government increase public transports and stop issuing registrations to a huge number of new private cars to reduce traffic jam.

The number of public buses and minibuses plying the city roads decreased to 4,000 from 7,500 in the last few years. However, 30,000 buses are required for around 1, 30, 00,000 city dwellers, said Osman Ali, general secretary of Bangladesh Road Transport Workers Federation.



A growing number of Eid shoppers were seen at different markets of the capital on the third day of Ramadan yesterday. The photo was taken at New Market.

PHOTO: STAR

SIX MISSING CREWS OF MV HOPE Families keep dwindling hopes alive

DWAIPAYAN BARUA, Ctg

Some of the families of the six missing crewmen of MV Hope still keep hopes alive of the return of their loved ones while others expect at least the recovery of the bodies for a decent funeral.

The Bangladeshi cargo vessel tilted in the Andaman Sea, near the coast of Phuket in Thailand, in the early hours of July 4. The ship's 17 crewmen abandoned ship fearing that it would capsize.

Nine of them were rescued alive while bodies of another two were found floating at sea.

Talking to The Daily Star yesterday, the families vented their anger at the ship's owning firm, Trade Breeze Shipping Limited, stating that it had not initiated search operations following a July 9 Thai newspaper report.

Phuket Gazette, an English language newspaper of Thailand, uploaded a news report online stating that local fishermen had seen four bodies in life jackets floating around 50 kilometres off the spot where the ship tilted.

"The news gave us hope but those bodies could not be recovered due to delays in the search," alleged Md Jakaria, son of one of the missing crewmen, Oiler Ali Hossain.

Captain Mohiuddin Abdul Kadir, representative of the ship's insurance firm P&I (Protection and Indemnity) Club, refuted the allegation.

On the night of July 9, Trade Breeze Shipping Limited had contacted Captain Segsit 1 -- an official of the ship owner's agent firm in Thailand named Thoresen Shipping & Logistics -- to verify the report,

he said.

To draw the attention of local fishermen and boatmen, Trade Breeze Shipping Limited also offered a \$6,000 reward -- \$1,000 for information leading to the recovery of each of the missing six, he said.

The Thai Navy also conducted search operations on Thursday but found nothing, added Captain Kadir, also representative of the ship's owning firm.

Md Jakaria, coming to the Chittagong city office of the ship owner's representative from his residence in Chittagong's Boalkhali upazila every day following the tilting incident, said he last talked to his 55-year-old father on July 2.

That day, MV Hope had left Port Lumut of Malaysia with 5,500 tonnes of ball clay and was scheduled to arrive at the Chittagong port on July 8.

"He was so excited to meet all of us after nine months, especially my elder brother's new bride, and spend the Eid festival here," Jakaria sobbed over the phone.

The parents of the missing 2nd Engineer Md Nezam Uddin, hailing from Anwara upazila of Chittagong, had settled everything to marry him off, informed Nezam's elder brother, Md Idris.

"My parents are crying all the time. They eagerly wait for him," he told The Daily Star.

Families of the remaining Captain Rajib Chandra Karmaker, crew Md Nasir Uddin, Electrician Sadim Ali and Chief Cook Nasir Uddin are also spending sleepless nights.

Captain Rajib's wife Rita Karmaker still believes her husband is holding on to life. She still believes he can be traced.

BNP team to attend seminar on Bangladesh in London

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A six-member BNP delegation will leave Dhaka for London tomorrow to attend a daylong seminar there on "Democracy and human rights in Bangladesh."

"Led by BNP Acting Secretary General Mirza Fakhru Islam Alamgir, we are going to attend the seminar at the invitation of the House of Lords, which will host the seminar on July 17," BNP Vice-Chairman Shamsheer M Chowdhury told The Daily Star last night.

Asked if the BNP team will meet the party Senior Vice-Chairman Tarique Rahman, staying in London since 2008, he said it would not be unnatural if they did so.

Chowdhury said they were likely to return after the end of the seminar. Apart from the BNP team, an Awami League delegation is also supposed to attend the seminar from Bangladesh, he added.

Tarique came into spotlight after his appearance in a meeting of BNP's UK chapter on May 20 where he asked the government to restore the caretaker government system.

JSC, SSC, HSC EXAMS 2013 158 Barisal students face punishment for cheating

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

A total of 158 students, who sat for the junior school, secondary school, and higher secondary certificate examinations this year under Barisal Education Board, will be disqualified from the exams and suspended from taking those exams for one to four years on charges of using unfair means, officials said yesterday.

In a BEB investigation, they were found guilty of copying answers from materials brought from outside, attaching prepared answer sheets to the answer script, and receiving written answers from outside the hall when the exam was underway.

The disciplinary committee of the board also decided to send show cause notices to two teachers for failing to check the examinees' deceitful conduct. The committee met at BEB conference room yesterday, presided over by BEB Chairman Dr Bimal Krishna Majumdar.

The penalised students, including 45 from JSC, 17 from SSC and 96 from HSC exams, will not be allowed to sit for their respective exams until their suspension periods expire.

Prof Enayet Hossain, a member of the disciplinary committee, said four JSC examinees would be suspended for two years and 41 for one year, all 17 SSC examinees for one year, and three HSC examinees for four years, 19 for two years, and 74 for one year.

An investigation is ongoing against eight other HSC examinees, the officials said.

STEP INTO YOUR WORLD OF PRIVILEGES

AT JASHIM UDDIN ROAD BRANCH

Giant Business Tower, Level 2, House 3 & 3/A
Sector 3, Uttara, Dhaka 1230

Eastern Bank Ltd.

JUST PAY*

20%

EID OFFER

THIS EID, TAKE HOME LG LED TV FOR JUST 20% DOWN PAYMENT AND CELEBRATE WITH YOUR LOVED ONES 100%

42"/32"

LED LN5110

32"

CINEMA 3D LA6130

55"/47"/42"

CINEMA 3D LA6910

24"/22"

LED LN4110

55"

CINEMA 3D LA8600

0% interest for 120 days. Attractive promotional price for cash purchase

096 111 51 515