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Rickshaws clog streets

Traffic police relax rules to allow non-motorised vehicles on city roads off limits to them

HELEMUL ALAM

Due to poor traffic rules enforcement, a large number of rickshaws travel on city streets that are off limits to non-motorised vehicles, worsening congestion and increasing risk of accidents.

Rickshaws and rickshaw-vans are now a near-regular mode of transport on Airport Road, where vehicles probably travel the fastest in the capital. On Mirpur Road, one might be excused for thinking there are no restrictions on rickshaws on that thoroughfare.

The mix of slow-moving and fast-moving traffic on the same street does not go well.

According to a recent study by Accident Research Institute of Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology, based on data provided by the Dhaka Metropolitan Police, victims of 10 percent fatal accidents on city streets are rickshaw pullers and their passengers.

Rickshaws largely defy all traffic rules and pose high risk for accidents. Their pullers would blissfully risk lives to cut a corner violating traffic rules.

Their passengers are also often seen preferring to take a risk to get ahead of other vehicles rather than playing it safe. The passengers are often seen defending rickshaw pullers on the street when their disregard for traffic rules leads to mishaps.

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Rickshaws, heavily loaded rickshaw vans and even a bicycle use the Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue at Sonargaon intersection even though the busiest street in Dhaka city is off-limits to non-motorised vehicles. *Inset*, rickshaws, alongside fast vehicles, head towards the intersection from Bangla Motor.

PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ



Poet Fazal Shahabuddin passes away

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Eminent poet and journalist Fazal Shahabuddin passed away at his residence in the capital's Madhya Basabo yesterday. He was 78.

Family members said the poet, who had been suffering from old-age complications over the last few months, breathed his last around 10:30am.

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PRAYER TIMING February 10		
Azan	Jamaat	
Fajr	5:30	6:05
Zahr	12:45	1:15
Asr	4:15	4:30
Maghrib	5:52	5:56
Esha	7:15	7:45

Source: Islamic Foundation

CASH, NOT CREST!

Chief whip slams media for reports

He won't apologise for comments

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Instead of saying sorry, Jatiya Sangsad Chief Whip ASM Feroz yesterday criticised the media for running the news items about his asking for money from those who want to give him gifts.

"With a smile, I made the comments jokingly. I actually didn't mean it. It would have been better had the media not run the stories. The media has undermined me," Feroz said at a press briefing at the Jatiya Sangsad Media Centre.

The briefing was organised in response to the reports based on his comments made at a reception at Bauphal in Patuakhali on Friday on his becoming the chief whip.

"I will receive no more crests. I want cash if anyone wants to give me a gift. Cash is what I want," he announced through a loudspeaker at the programme. "Don't you understand? Huge money is needed to contest election."



ASM Feroz

Local cable operators aired the event. A video clip of these comments is also available on YouTube.

Feroz, who enjoys the status of a minister, at yesterday's briefing also said, "I will not apologise as I did not actually mean it." Rather, he said, the journalists who tried to "assassinate his character" should say sorry.

"There were many words, before and after my speech, which the media did not carry properly." But he didn't say what those words were.

He also alleged the media exaggerated his statement.

Replying to a question, the Awami League leader said he would not go for any measures against the media. He sought divine blessings so that the media gets itself "corrected".

Identifying himself as a national-level leader, Feroz said some people in the Awami

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Rising slowly against fear

SOHEL PARVEZ and KONGKON KARMAKER

As the night thickened and numbing cold began to set in, 29-year-old Liton Kanta Roy took his blanket and a small torch to join a voluntary patrol team at Telipara, home to 150 Hindu families.

The three-member team, two of them carrying bows and arrows,

passed through narrow passages beside mud-and-bamboo-cane-built houses that sit in close proximity on both sides of the village road.

Occasionally, one of the team members blew whistle to alert other teams that were guarding the borders of the locality with sticks, bows and arrows. The aim was to resist any sudden attack by outsiders on the poor

villagers at dead of the night.

"It has become our regular duty since we were attacked on the January 5 election day. Every night we guard our locality in groups so that others can sleep without fear," said a half-masked Liton, pausing for warmth at a campfire set by another team to keep an eye on the road.

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A banner hangs calling for an end to communal violence near Kornai Govt Primary School in Dinajpur amid the rubble of shops that had been levelled. The photo was taken at the end of January, weeks after the violence broke out centring the January-5 elections.

PHOTO: STAR

Mamata govt helping Jamaat

Says Biman Bose

THE ECONOMIC TIMES ONLINE

Accusing the Trinamool Congress government of helping fundamentalist forces in Bangladesh, the Left Front yesterday said its stand has resulted in fanaticism belonging to both the majority and minority communities becoming more active in West Bengal.

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1

EGYPT PRESIDENTIAL RACE

Leftwinger contests against army chief

THE GUARDIAN ONLINE

The veteran leftwinger Hamdeen Sabbahi has become the first candidate to officially enter the race to succeed Mohamed Morsi as Egyptian president, ensuring that the army chief Abdel Fatah al-Sisi will not be elected unopposed.

Sisi, who rose to popularity after toppling Morsi last July, is still expected to win by a landslide. But the involvement of Sabbahi, who finished third in Egypt's 2012 presidential elections, means there will be a credible contest, despite other potential candidates opting out of the race in deference to Sisi.

Sabbahi's platform is likely to tread on Sisi's patch. Both men use nationalism to drum up support, and both have

SEE PAGE 10 COL 4

Robocops help ease traffic jam


ODDITYCENTRAL.COM

The intersection of Boulevard Triomphal and Huileries Avenue in Kinshasa, Congo, has two new additions -- robot traffic policemen.

These large robocops have replaced human police

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1





সোনালী ব্যাংক লিমিটেড

উদ্ভাবনী ব্যাংকিং এ আপনার বিশ্বস্ত সঙ্গী

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আপনি জানেন কি?

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