

CHITTAGONG CITY Illegal CNG-run easy bikes hit streets

MINHAJ UDDIN, Ctg

Within two weeks after battery-run rickshaws were banned in Chittagong city, a new breed of imported easy bikes, powered by natural gas, have hit the streets. These unauthorised vehicles are growing in number by the day, and currently there are about 200 of them on the road.

Resembling the electric easy bike, this new vehicle is powered by compressed natural gas (CNG) in a cylinder placed under the seat instead of re-chargeable batteries.

Experts fear that because of the cylinder being put in a vulnerable position, it may lead to explosion and fatal consequences in the event of an accident.

"Attaching a gas cylinder in a fragile structure of the easy bike is very risky," said Assistant Director (Engineering) Jamal Uddin of Bangladesh Road Transport Authority. Usually the gas cylinder is rested on a protected place in auto-rickshaws, he said. The official said BRTA was not aware of the CNG-run easy bikes.

Sujayet Islam, deputy commissioner traffic (port) of Chittagong Metropolitan Police (CMP), said they ordered traffic inspectors to seize all easy bikes, run by both gas and batteries.

However, the order seems to have gone unheeded, as easy bikes are found roaming freely and taking passengers here and there.

The new easy bikes, imported from China and selling for Tk 2.08 lakh each, are operating under three organisations--Chittagong District Awami Motor Drivers League, Chittagong Auto-rickshaw Auto-tempo Workers Union, and Chittagong District Auto-tempo Auto-Rickshaw Workers Union.

Babul Sheikh, general secretary of the second organisation, said, "We are operating those by managing law enforcers". Now 190 vehicles are on the streets, and five are being added daily, he said.

Drivers and owners said initially they paid Tk 6,000 to be member of any of the three organisations. Babul Sheikh said that in addition they had to pay Tk 2,000 monthly and Tk 40 daily each, which was sent to police as bribes.

Shahidul Islam and Shohrab Uddin, traffic inspectors of EPZ and Patenga areas, admitted the presence of the illegal vehicles but denied taking bribes. They said regular

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A recently imported CNG-run easy bike which has its gas cylinder right beneath the passenger seat, multiplying the risks of riding the shaky vehicle, in Chittagong city yesterday.

PHOTO: ANURUP KANTI DAS

Chehlum

CITY DESK

The chehlum of Syeda Rasheda Nasrin, wife of M Meftah Ur Rahman, former secretary of Bangladesh Steel & Engineering Corporation, will be held after Zohr prayers tomorrow at Swarna Kutir, 5 Goolnagar Lane, Nawabpur Road, Dhaka, says a press release.

Doa mahfil

CITY DESK



Yesterday marked the 25th death anniversary of Syed Anissuzzaman, renowned income tax lawyer.

A doa mahfil will be held today in his village mosque and in his grand son's house in Dhaka.

Injurious to health

FROM PAGE 5

"Dhaka Water Supply and Sewerage Authority (Wasa) is working to develop the drainage system, and soon after completion of their work, we will start the repairs again at that point," he said.

Abul Kalam Md Azad, executive engineer of zone-1 of Dhaka South City Corporation, said that since the construction of Moghbazar-Mouchak flyover started in 2013, they had handed over the road to the LGED and they were responsible for any work during the period of the construction.

SDM Quamrul Alam Chowdhury, deputy director of Wasa, said that as some construction materials and solid waste had fallen into the drainage line, it could not drain rainwater effectively.

Moreover, the rivers surrounding the capital are swelling, which is one reason why the rainwater is moving out so slowly, he said. "We're trying to unclog the sewers continuously."

SC order on Khaleda's

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Challenging the legality of Judge Roy's appointment, Khaleda filed the two writ petitions with the High Court on May 12. But those were rejected on June 19.

On July 7, Khaleda filed two separate leave to appeal petitions with the SC against the HC order.

Obituary

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Benapole

Sahidul Islam, president of Jhikorgachha upazila unit Krishak League, died of old-age complications at his village home on Wednesday. He was 75 and buried in the village graveyard.

Death anniversary

CITY DESK



Tomorrow is the 12th death anniversary of Abu Muhammad Murtayish (Kachi), Supreme Court advocate and a founder of Padatik Natya Sangsad, and Bangladesh Law Association, says a press release. A Qurankhwani and a milad mahfil will be held today after the Juma prayers in the mosque of his village.

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Correction

An advertisement titled 'Bangladesh now leads the world in financial inclusivity' published in the back page of The Daily Star on September 11, 2014 inadvertently mentioned the number of mobile wallets as 167 million. The correct number would be 17.6 million. bKash Limited regrets the unintentional error.

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Dhaka launches global

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forward the cause of those having autism.

Around 0.8 percent of children between the ages of 5 and 17 years have autism or neurodevelopment disorders in Bangladesh, said Prof Golam Rabbani, chairperson of Neurodevelopment Disability Protection Trust of the social welfare ministry.

He said early diagnosis of children with any neurodevelopment disorders was better to treat them.

Autism spectrum disorders are a complex medical condition, characterised by a lack of language development, impaired social communication, hypersensitivity to sensory stimulation, repetitive mannerisms and restricted interests.

These conditions, in turn, affect a person's health, social, educational and economic functioning, says WHO.

"We must empower families and communities with information and services to create a more inclusive world for children who suffer from ASDs," said Dr Poonam Khetrpal Singh, WHO regional director for South-East Asia.

"There is an urgent need to develop innovative ways and embed appropriate interventions into health systems to reach the affected," she said at a side event of the regional conference.

In another session of the event, health experts suggested maintaining rigorous standards to ensure quality of traditional medicines.

"If appropriately integrated into the existing health systems, traditional medicines can play an important role in achieving Universal Health Coverage," said Dr Poonam.

She mentioned that traditional medicine practitioners remain the primary healthcare providers for millions of people in South-East Asia.

In Bangladesh, around 70 people in the rural and semi-urban areas prefer to use traditional Ayurvedic or Unani medicines, Dr Gaur Mani Singh, line director of the Directorate General of Health Services.

WHO in a statement said it had launched a strategy to meet the increasing demand of traditional medicines, improve quality, safety and efficacy.

In a plenary session on harmful drinking of alcohol, Health Minister Mohammed Nasim called upon the South-East Asian countries to wage a movement against drug abuse, saying that such abuses of drugs were destroying many of the youths.

Meanwhile, Nasim on Wednesday called upon Maldives Health Minister Hussain Rashid to provide health insurance to the Bangladeshis working in the Maldives.

During the bilateral talks on the sidelines of the conference, Rashid assured of considering the issue.

Don't empower JS

FROM PAGE 3

proposed by the SCBA president to "protect the independence of the judiciary".

At a meeting organised by the samity on September 9, SCBA President Khandker Mahbub Hossain proposed forming the committee with Dr Kamal Hossain as head.

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Interested bidders may inspect and collect the detailed Terms of Reference [TOR] including the **Bid Form**, from the Reception Desk of the World Bank Office at the address mentioned above from **September 14 - 18, 2014, during 10:00 am to 2:00 pm** from Sunday through Thursday and submit the bids by completing the Bid Form in the manner prescribed therein in a sealed envelope to the World Bank Office **latest by 12:00 pm on September 22, 2014**. At the top of the envelope, please write "BID FOR VEHICLE".

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