

App-based services to be brought under control: DMP chief

Traffic discipline programme begins

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Vehicles plying under app-based ridesharing services are contributing to the traffic chaos in the capital, and the government is working to bring them under discipline, said Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) commissioner Asaduzzaman Mia yesterday.

"We want to bring the total traffic system of the capital under discipline," the DMP chief said in his welcome speech at the inauguration of the fortnight-long traffic discipline campaign at the capital's Zero Point.

"We have noticed that the app-based services Uber and Pathao have brought out thousands of vehicles on the street. The home minister and road transport and bridges minister are thinking of bringing those vehicles under control."

Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan inaugurated the programme. "We want to make people aware that life is more valuable than time. Safety is more important than going ahead of others," he said while speaking there.

However, minutes after the inauguration, his car, along with those of some police high-ups, drove on the wrong side of the road.

As the minister walked to the Zero Point road island to distribute leaflets and put up stickers containing awareness

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There are cars parked on the road; there are cars parked on the footpath. And then there is one that is parked on both – on Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue in Karwan Bazar, left. Amid this level of mockery of traffic rules, DMP launched a fortnight-long traffic discipline programme yesterday. Traffic police set up check posts, while a volunteer of Bangladesh Red Crescent Society ensures that pedestrians do not jaywalk in Motijheel area.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN, PRABIR DAS



Ridesharing hero Shahanaaj loses bike to fraudster

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Shahanaaj Akhter, the woman who became a social media sensation less than a week ago for her struggle to provide for her family by offering ridesharing services on a scooter, had her bike stolen yesterday afternoon.

According to her general diary filed with Sher-e-Bangla Nagar Police Station, one Jony introduced himself as a driver of a ridesharing service, and promised to avail her full-time employment.

He met the person yesterday, and after driving around the city for a while, was having a cup of tea with him in Khamarbari area. He wanted to test-ride the scooter and she gave it to him. Jony took off with the ride, she said in the GD.

Confirming the incident, Officer-in-Charge GG Biswas of the police station said, "We are trying our best to recover the bike."

The struggle of Shahanaaj, a single mother of two daughters, came to limelight when her story was posted on Facebook by online activist Rafiuzzaman Sifat. The post has been shared nearly 10,000 times, with many hailing her courage and determination.

Quader should apologise in stadium: Fakhrul

UNB, Dhaka

BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir yesterday asked his ruling party counterpart Obaidul Quader to apologise publicly for committing the offence of "vote rigging" in the 11th parliamentary election.

"Now, they [govt] are unable to handle such a major rigging... ask Mr Quader (AL general secretary) to go to a stadium and apologise to the nation for resorting to blatant lies and deceiving people," he said.

The BNP leader further said, "A path will be created for discussions with other parties if they [AL] apologise to people."

Fakhrul came up with the remarks while talking to reporters after visiting post-polls violence victim and Jashore Jubo Dal activist Faisal Ali at Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

Faisal was reportedly stabbed by ruling party activists on December 31, 2018 in Jashore.

Fakhrul alleged that the country has turned into a

hospital as Awami League usurped power snatching people's voting rights.

"They're now finding out their opponents in every district, upazila and union and repressing them. They're also... creating anarchic situation in the country," he alleged.

Referring to his Monday's visit to Sylhet's Balaganj, Fakhrul said locals narrated how opposition leaders and activists were tortured and a Chhatra Dal activist was gunned down on election day. "They [AL activists] even opened fire on women there," he alleged.

He alleged that the ruling party is now initiating various "evil" tactics to justify the election at home and abroad. "It's very regrettable that they have no sense of shame. They're claiming a grand victory, but people are utterly frustrated as they couldn't exercise their voting rights."

The BNP leader said the ruling party is least bothered about people's pain and agony as it lost direction due to greed for power.

AL to contest upazila polls without alliance

UNB, Dhaka

Awami League will contest the upcoming upazila parishad polls without any alliance, said party General Secretary Obaidul Quader yesterday.

"We won't go to polls as part of any alliance," he said at a meeting of Awami League's Dhaka North unit held at the party's Dhanmondi office in Dhaka.

AL, led by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, won an overwhelming majority in the December 30 national election. The ruling party-led alliance secured 96 percent seats in the 300-member parliament while BNP and its allies won eight seats.

Quader said presidents of the party's upazila and district units would suggest three possible candidates and the party's upazila election nomination board will choose one of them.

The Election Commission is likely to announce the schedule for the upazila parishad polls in the first week of February.

The commission may start holding the election in phases from the first week of March, said Election Commission Secretary Helal Uddin Ahmed.

As per law, union parishad election must be held at least six months before the tenure of the local government body expires.

In 2014, elections in 487 upazilas were held in six phases between February and May.

Charity swindlers caught

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Sacked customs official Helaluddin used to identify himself as a social worker.

Preparing fake documents of Bangladesh Bank and letters with the prime minister's fake signature, the 55-year-old met various charity organisations, mostly mosque and madrasa committees.

He showed them the documents and sought money from them, claiming that he has around Tk 54,000 crore stuck in Bangladesh Bank and needs investment to release the fund.

Helal then lured the organisations into giving him some money and promised them two percent of the fund. Using the technique, Helal along with seven others allegedly misappropriated Tk 42 lakh from a madrasa in the capital's Pallabi area.

The Criminal Investigation Department (CID) of police got the information while investigating a case filed with Pallabi Police Station on November

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SAGAR-RUNI MURDER

Investigators took 62 dates, probe yet to be completed

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday asked Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) to submit probe report of the case filed over the murders of journalist couple Sagar-Runi by February 17.

Metropolitan Magistrate Debbrata Biswas passed the order after Md Sahidar Rahman, assistant superintendent of police at Rab and also the investigation officer of the case, failed to submit any probe report yesterday.

With this, different investigating agencies, including Rab, took over 62 dates for completing the probe.

Different courts earlier expressed dissatisfaction over the investigation process.

Meherun Runi, senior reporter of private TV channel ATN Bangla, and her husband Sagar Sarowar, news editor of Maasranga TV,

were murdered on February 11, 2012.

The couple's only child Mahir Sarowar Megh, who was only five at the time, was in the apartment when his parents were murdered.

The next day, Nawsher Alam Roman, younger brother of Runi, filed a murder case with Sher-e-Bangla Nagar Police Station without accusing anyone in particular.

After investigation by Sher-e-Bangla Nagar police and detectives, Rab started further probe on April 18, 2012.

At least eight people, including Rafiqul Islam, Bakul Miah, Masum Mintu, Kamrul Hasan alias Arun, Abu Sayeed, two security guards of the couple's house – Palash Rudra Paul and Enamul Hoque, and the couple's "family friend" Tanveer Rahman had been arrested in this regard. Tanveer is out on bail.

BANANI DOUBLE RAPE CASE

Prosecution seeks bail cancellation of prime accused

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Prosecution of the sensational Banani double rape case yesterday submitted a petition to a tribunal in Dhaka seeking cancellation of bail of Ahmed Shafat, the prime accused in the case.

Dhaka Metropolitan Public Prosecutor Abdullah Abu filed the petition with the 7th Special Tribunal for Prevention of Women & Children Repression of Dhaka.

In the petition, Abu mentioned that Shafat, son of Dildar Hossain Selim, one of the owners of Apan Jewellers, got ad-interim bail on November 29 last year on health grounds. But he is quite well now. The defence failed to submit any medical certificates, he added.

Moreover, if Shafat is on bail, he will

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Oikyafront's demand disrespectful to people

Law minister says about calls for re-election

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Law Minister Anisul Huq yesterday said Jatiya Oikyafront's demand for holding a re-election is unconstitutional and "very illogical".

"Jatiya Oikyafront's demand is an expression of disrespect to the people," the minister said while talking to reporters after attending a programme, organised to accord a farewell to Zafarul Hasan, outgoing director of National Legal Aid Services Organization (NLASO), at its Bailey Road office.

The law minister said Oikyafront has no right to dishonour the peo-

ple, who have cast their votes in the December 30 general election.

Replying to a question, Anisul Huq also said, Hefajat-e-Islam Chief Ahmad Shafi's comment about girls' education is opposing to the positive development of the country.

"Last year, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina recognised Dawra degree of Qawmi madrasa as equivalent to master's degree, which was a positive step. Allama Shafi is a senior person. With due respect to him, I want to say that his comment will be opposite to the country's positive development. It will be better if such a

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REMARKS ON GIRLS' EDUCATION

Rights activists demand legal action against Shafi

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A group of labour leaders and rights activists yesterday demanded that the government take legal actions against Hefajat-e-Islam's Amir Shah Ahmad Shafi for his recent remarks on girls' education.

Speaking at a human chain in front of Jatiya Press Club in Dhaka, they also said Shafi must acknowledge his mistake and withdraw the comments through apologising to the entire nation, especially women.

National Domestic Women Workers Union, a platform of domestic workers and labour leaders, organised the human chain to protest the controversial remarks of the Hefajat-e-Islam leader.

Last Friday, speaking at a rally in Chattogram, Shafi made parents promise not to send their daughters to school, saying – "At most, you can allow them to study up to class four or five, so that they can maintain their husbands' accounts and can write

letters to them."

His remarks ignited a firestorm of protests from various sections of society as well as on social media.

At the human chain, Jobaida Pervin, a Supreme Court lawyer, said Shafi's remarks are against the country's constitution and other international laws, and he should be brought under trial for treason.

"Fundamentalists like Shafi don't need to speak against women. They can and should control their tongues," said Jobaida, also executive president of the Workers Union.

Wajedul Islam Khan, general secretary of Bangladesh Trade Union Centre, said, "We are demanding exemplary punishment for Ahmed Shafi, through a treason case against him for making derogatory remarks on women."

If he does not withdraw his comments, people will not forgive him, Wajedul added.

Abul Hossain, president of Workers Party's Dhaka unit, said, "Ahmed Shafi is suffering from senility. He is providing false interpretations of Islam. Islam ensures equality for both men and women."

He also claimed that Hefajat-e-Islam is an organisation of fundamentalists, and they "do not believe" in the sovereignty of Bangladesh.



Activists of 'National Domestic Women Workers Union' form a human chain in front of Jatiya Press Club in the capital yesterday, demanding that Hefazat-e-Islam chief Ahmad Shafi retract his "indecent remarks" about women, and seeking justice for women and child victims of recent rape and murder incidents.

PHOTO: STAR

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