

Circular bus service launched in Dhanmondi

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A circular bus service, which will run on Dhanmondi-New Market-Azimpur route, hit the road yesterday with an aim to ease traffic congestion in Dhanmondi and nearby areas.

Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC) Mayor Sayeed Khokon inaugurated the bus service near Kalabagan bus stand.

The service will initially run with some 20 air-conditioned BRTC buses, which will pick up and drop off passengers at 36 points on the route, the mayor said while launching the service.

This initiative is part of a plan of the Bus Route Rationalisation Committee which was formed to bring Dhaka's bus service under discipline, he said.

The buses will ply from Katabon-Nilkhel to New Market-Azimpur via Science Laboratory, Dhaka College, Dhanmondi Road 2, Satmasjid Road, Dhanmondi Road 27, Palashi and New Elephant Road.

The lowest fare is Tk 10, from the first stop to the second, while the highest fare is set at Tk 30, the DSCC mayor said.

"This service will not only ensure safety and discipline on the roads of Dhanmondi, but also reduce traffic congestion in the area," he claimed.

While addressing the inauguration programme, Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) Commissioner Asaduzzaman Mia

said, "People have become more aware. Around 97-98 percent bikers now use helmets but discipline is still lacking in the public transport sector."

Acknowledging their failure in bringing the transport sector under discipline, the DMP commissioner said they are going to take several measures and the results will be apparent within the next 15 days.

He said drivers will have to act responsibly on the road and follow traffic rules; otherwise they have to face punishment.

Urging people to follow traffic rules, he said they will also take action against errant pedestrians.

FOUR NEW DOUBLE-DECKERS

Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC) introduced four double-decker BRTC buses on the route stretching from airport to Zero Point in Gulistan via Kuril Biswa Road, Badda, Rampura and Malibagh yesterday to reduce pressure on public transport as well as ensure road safety.

Twenty more BRTC buses would be added within the next two weeks to cut down dependency on private buses, said DNCC Mayor Md Atiqul Islam while launching the service at a programme near the airport.

The DNCC mayor said as registrations of all buses belonging to Jabal-e-Noor and Suprovat were cancelled after the tragic accident on March 19, these BRTC buses will reduce commuting woes of the public.



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BRTC buses line up in Kalabagan as the circular service is launched. Inset, mayors of the two Dhaka city corporations hold up pre-paid bus passes.

Swindling job seekers with 'overseas posts that never existed'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Tejgaon police yesterday arrested four members of a fraud gang who swindled "hundreds of crores of taka" from around 1,000 job seekers in the last three-four years, promising them lucrative jobs in Qatar.

Biplob Kumar Sarker, deputy commissioner of Tejgaon division of Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP), at a press briefing in his office said the 15-member gang took Tk three-four lakh from each job seeker.

He said the gang, in connivance with some employees of a popular job portal, uploaded fake circulars for posts like "retail store manager" or "commercial manager" in Qatar-based

companies.

They issued circulars for jobs in Delta Group, Ali Bin Group, AHA Group or sometimes as "a reputed multinational company" and offered handsome salaries and accommodation facilities.

As eager job seekers contacted them, they would ask for necessary documents. In phases, they would ask for different amounts of money -- showing the job seekers fake offer letter, appointment letter, confirmation letter, employment contract, police clearance certificate and even Qatar visa.

The frauds opened mobile banking accounts using SIM cards registered with biometric data belonging to others. Once money was sent, they

would promise to provide flight schedule later and stop communicating with the job seeker, Biplob said.

The Tejgaon DC said they started investigation after a victim lodged a complaint with Tejgaon Industrial Area Police Station recently, and arrested four including the gang leader Shahin Haider. Other arrestees are: Hasan, Shyamol and Tajul.

They were produced before a Dhaka court yesterday with a seven-day remand prayer for each, but the court granted one-day remand.

Police also revealed that Shahin Haider has purchased a restaurant in London and an apartment in Dhanmondi, Dhaka with the money.

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Three youngsters take the opportunity of relatively light traffic on Tuesday on the occasion of Independence Day and enjoy roller skating on Abdul Gani Road.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

DHAKA TODAY

PUBLIC HEARING

Fire risk-free and safe

Old Dhaka

Organiser: Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association

Venue: CIRDAP Auditorium

Time: 10am

CULTURAL PROGRAMME

Bosonto Utso

Organiser: Dhaka University Cultural Society

Venue: TSC, DU

Time: 10am

FILM FESTIVAL

Alo-r Poth e Preeti-r

Sathe

Organiser: Kishor Alo

Venue: Bishweshwar Kendro

Time: 3pm

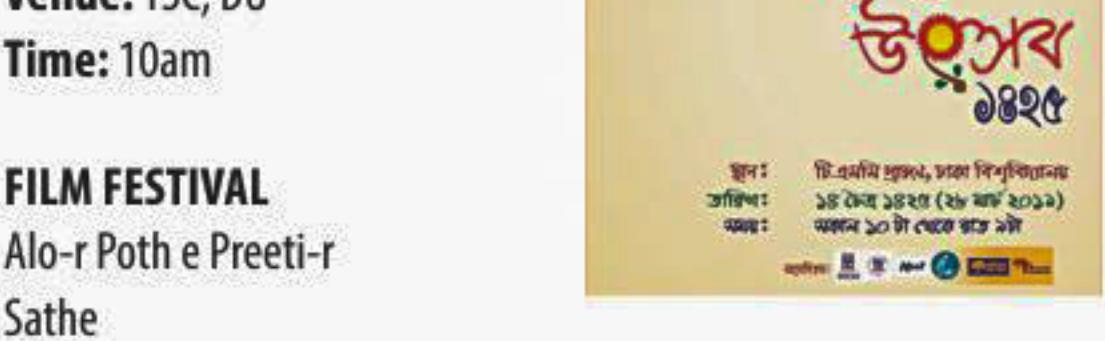
SEMINAR

Alternative Care of Children in Bangladesh: Challenges and Intervention

Organiser: SOS Children's Village

Venue: Nawab Ali Chowdhury Senate Bhaban, Dhaka

Time: 9am



WORKSHOP

Pedestrian-friendly Dhaka

Organiser: DTCA

Venue: Hotel Lakeshore

Time: 3:30pm

Final report after consulting civil society

Shajahan Khan on road safety committee's report

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A committee headed by former shipping minister Shajahan Khan yesterday decided to take more opinions before finalising their report on preventing road accidents and bringing discipline in the road transportation sector.

The committee will hold a meeting with civil society members on March 31 and another meeting on April 3 with editors and media personalities.

"We have finalised our draft and will prepare final report with their [dignitaries and media personalities] opinion. We hope to submit our report within April 4," Shajahan Khan told reporters at Bangladesh Road Transport Authority in the capital.

The committee has already prepared a draft report containing 111 recommendations.

But some existing laws, guidelines, and reports of other committees already cover many of the recommendations.

Shajahan denied the similarities.

The committee, in its draft report, also said the media must refrain from "spreading negative and confusing information" on road accidents.

E-passport service delayed by 6 months

Govt to procure materials for 20 lakh machine-readable ones

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government is going to buy materials for 20 lakh machine-readable passports, as the introduction of new electronic passports (e-passports) has been delayed for six months.

Booklets and lamination foils will be imported from UK-based De La Rue International Ltd, at a cost of Tk 40.71 crores.

The cabinet committee on purchase yesterday in a meeting approved a proposal by the home ministry, at the secretariat in the capital. Finance Minister AHM Mustafa Kamal presided over the meeting.

The government took the decision so that people do not face any trouble to get passports until e-passports are launched, the minister told journalists after the meeting.

In July 2018, the government signed an agreement with German firm Veridos GmbH to promote Bangladesh into the e-passport era, which was expected to begin in December the same year.

However, authorities of Veridos rescheduled the deadline to July this year, when e-passports will be introduced on a pilot basis. It will be available for all two years later, according to the home ministry proposal.

Due to the delay, the government is going to import machine-readable passport materials from the British company for the second time. So far, between 2013

and 2018, the government has imported the materials for about 2.05 crore passports.

The current demand of the booklet and foil is about 20,000 per day. At present, the Department of Immigration and Passports has enough materials to issue 33,993 passports, while materials for 1,74,400 more will arrive soon, said the proposal.

Last June, the Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (Ecnec) approved a project to introduce e-passports, which many countries of the world are using nowadays.

Under the project, worth around Tk 4,636 crore, some 2.8 crore e-passport booklets will be produced in the country, while 20 lakh will be imported.

Demographic information, fingerprints, photo of cornea and digital signature will be collected and preserved in the government server as part of the e-passport scheme.

At the meeting, the purchase committee approved another proposal of the food ministry to import 50,000 tonnes of wheat. Singapore-based Agrocorp International Pte Ltd will supply the wheat at a cost of USD 268 per tonne.

Mustafa Kamal said the government has so far imported a total of 3.5 lakh tonnes of wheat this fiscal year to meet the domestic need.

Besides, the committee approved another proposal to buy equipment for fire service stations at 156 upazilas across the country, at a cost of Tk 88.44 crore.

Two 'traffickers' held in Dhaka
4 Rohingya women were being sent to Saudi Arabia

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rapid Action Battalion claimed to have arrested two members of a human trafficking gang in the capital, who were trying to traffic four Rohingya women to Saudi Arabia by forging documents.

Abdul Hamid, 30, of Cox's Bazar and Riad Hossain, 34, were arrested around 9:15pm on Tuesday from Khilgaon area, said Lt Col Ermanul Hasan, commanding officer of Rab-3.

Rab also seized 33 passports and forged copies of NIDs and birth certificates from them, he added.

The commanding officer said Hamid took the Rohingya women to his Khilgaon residence from Teknaf camp with the help of his accomplices in Cox's Bazar -- Zahid and Mominul -- in early March.

Rab, a broker who runs a photocopy shop near Keraniganj passport office, submitted their passport applications to the office through forging documents, including birth certificates and NIDs.

The gang chose Rohingya

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ইলেক্ট্রনিক ডেটার মেশিন (ইডিমেম) এ অনুশীলনমূলক ডেটার এ অংশগ্রহণ করতে

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