

Rickshaws responsible for 40pc of Dhaka's commutes

Introduce adequate alternatives before banning them from roads: BIP

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Urban planners yesterday said authorities should introduce adequate alternatives to rickshaw as a mode of public transport before banning it from city thoroughfares.

Separation of non-motorised means of transport, such as rickshaw, from the city's overall transport plan cannot be done overnight because of their utility, they said at a press conference at Bangladesh Institute of Planners (BIP) in the capital.

BIP arranged the press conference on "what should be done on plying of rickshaw and non-motorised vehicle in Dhaka city from an urban planning perspective", following the recent ban on rickshaws on three major roads by Dhaka South City Corporation.

Stressing the need for "integrated communication system" based on multi-mode transport, BIP General Secretary Adil Muhammad Khan said concerned authorities should formally recognise rickshaw's contribution and make its role specific in urban transport system, considering the road capacity. "Although making roads off-limits to rickshaws can be a temporary remedy, traffic congestion will not ease up if restriction is not imposed on private cars," he said, presenting a paper.

Officially, 79,547 rickshaws are on Dhaka streets at present. However, the unofficial number could be 8-10 lakh, he said, adding that rickshaws were last brought under formal registration



FILE PHOTO

procedure in 1986 by the then Dhaka City Corporation.

Rickshaws are responsible for some 40 percent of Dhaka's total commutes each day, he said, referring to data of the city's Strategic Transport Plan.

He recommended providing licenses to required number of rickshaws and gradual withdrawal of unlicensed rickshaws from city streets.

Until alternative mode of transport are introduced, concerned authorities should create dedicated lanes for slow-moving vehicles like rickshaw to mitigate traffic congestion, said BIP

President AKM Abul Kalam.

Musleh Uddin Hasan, an associate professor of Department of Urban and Regional Planning at Buet, said some roads have been made off-limits to rickshaws. However, private cars are allowed on those roads.

He called upon concerned authorities to ensure "social justice" while taking such decisions.

Instead of taking random decisions like making roads off-limits to rickshaws, steps should be taken based on long-term action plans, said BIP Vice President Prof Akter Mahmud.

Nearly 9,000 Bangladeshis in prisons abroad

Momen tells House

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Foreign minister AK Abdul Momen yesterday informed the parliament that a total of 8,848 Bangladeshi citizens are currently in jails and detention centres in 53 countries.

Foreign ministry, with the help from embassies, are working to bring back these detained Bangladeshis. The ministry appoints lawyers to help detainees on legal ground to free them and get general amnesty, Momen said while answering a query of ruling Awami League lawmaker Abdul Latif.

According to the minister, the highest number of 2,049 detainees are in prisons of India.

In addition, there are 1,289 prisoners in Saudi Arabia, 1,156 in UAE, 693 in Bahrain, 572 in Malaysia, 442 in Oman and 316 in Kuwait and other countries, he said.

Answering to another query, Momen said his ministry is going to launch a smartphone app named "Dutabash", to offer round-the-clock service to Bangladeshi expatriates.

DHAKA-ASHULIA FLYOVER

Construction to begin by December: Quader

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Construction work of the Dhaka-Ashulia Elevated Expressway is expected to start in December this year, for quick entry and exit of vehicles to and from the capital.

"Commercial agreement of the project has already been signed, and a loan deal will be signed soon. We hope that the construction work of main expressway will start within December this year," Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader said yesterday.

He was talking to reporters after attending a contract signing ceremony regarding the project at Setu Bhaban in the capital.

The 24-kilometre expressway will connect Hazrat Shahjhal International Airport to Abdullahpur, Ashulia, DEPZ and Chandra on Dhaka-Tangail Highway. It will be an extension of the 20km Dhaka Elevated Expressway, linking airport to the Dhaka-Chattogram highway near Shanir Akhra.

Once the expressway is completed, it will help ease traffic congestion and allow trucks to move across the capital throughout the day. Trucks are now barred from entering the city from 8am to 8pm to avoid tailbacks.

In October 2017, the Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (Ecne) gave the go-ahead to the Tk 16,901 crore project, 65 percent of which will be financed by China.

According to the Bridges Division, a deal has already been signed with China National Machinery Import and Export Corporation -- which was nominated by the Chinese government, and the process to sign loan agreement with China Exim Bank is now at final stage.

Yesterday, Bangladesh Bridge Authority (BBA) signed a contract with a joint venture company to design review and supervision of the construction of the project at the cost Tk 104.14 crore

The joint venture firm comprises of three companies: Tecnica Y Proyectos SA (TYP) of Spain, JV DOHWA of South Korea and DDC of Bangladesh.

Quazi Muhammad Ferdous, chief engineer of BBA, and Antonio Rodriguez Castellanos, managing director of TYP, signed the contract.

'OPPOSITION SPREADING RUMOURS SURROUNDING PADMA BRIDGE' Obaidul Quader also said action would be taken against those who are spreading rumours about the need of human sacrifice for the Padma Bridge project.

He indirectly linked the opposition with the rumour. "The opposition has failed in election and in movement. Now, rumour is their capital," he said.

He said a bizarre propaganda is being spread on social media that human sacrifices are required for Padma Bridge. Bridges Division has already talked to different intelligence agencies and Rab, to find out who are spreading the rumour, he added.

The prime minister also asked authorities concerned to take action against them, he said, adding that one person was arrested in this regard. He, however, said they are yet to assert the arrestee's political affiliation.

Senior Secretary to Bridges Division Khandker Anwarul Islam, Dhaka-Ashulia Flyover's project director Shahabuddin Khan and Padma Bridge project director Shafiqul Islam were present.

DENGUE OUTBREAK

Lawyer serves legal notice to DSCC over wife's illness

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A Supreme Court lawyer yesterday sent a legal notice to Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC), seeking Tk 50 lakh as compensation for his wife, who has been diagnosed with dengue fever.

He alleged that his wife is suffering from the fever due to the city corporation's failure to prevent Aedes mosquito in his neighbourhood.

Advocate Tanzim Al Islam served the notice to the mayor and chief executive officer (CEO) of DSCC, asking them to compensate him in seven days. He also requested the mayor and top official to take effective steps to prevent the mosquito menace in next three days in Khilgaon (ward 1), where his family resides.

Advocate Tanzim in the legal notice said his wife Sadik Un Nahar was affected by dengue fever on June 29. She underwent treatment at a hospital for five days but is still unwell.

The lawyer said as DSCC has completely failed to prevent the menace, the authorities will have to take the responsibility of his wife being affected by dengue fever.

Advocate Tanzim told The Daily Star that he will file a writ petition with the High Court, seeking necessary order on the mayor and CEO if they do not take necessary steps in this regard.

MEANING, TENURE OF LIFE TERM SC verdict any day

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court will deliver its verdict any day on a review petition involving the dispute over the meaning and tenure of a convict's life imprisonment.

A seven-member bench of the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court -- headed by Chief Justice Syed Mahmud Hossain -- yesterday kept the review petition curia advisari vult (meaning the verdict will be delivered any day), after it concluded hearing yesterday on a review petition filed by one Ataur Mridha.

The court heard expert opinions from four amicus curiae (friends of court) -- Advocate AF Hasan Ariff, Barrister Rakanuddin Mahmud, Advocate Abdur Rezak Khan and Advocate AM Aminuddin -- on the issue.

Advocate Khandker Mahub Hossain and Advocate Shishir Manir appeared for the petitioner while Attorney General Mahbubey Alam argued for the state.

Mridha challenged an apex court verdict that on February 14, 2017 commuted his death penalty to life imprisonment in a murder case.

The Appellate Division bench headed by then Chief Justice SK Sinha said life imprisonment means jail sentence until natural death of the convict.

Showcasing Dhaka's rich heritage

PM urges OIC members to work together to flourish Islamic tourism



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina along with dignitaries at the event yesterday.

PHOTO: PID

BSS, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday stressed the need for taking prompt measures to make Islamic tourism a global business brand considering its huge potential since it witnesses 8.3 percent annual growth.

"The value of Islamic tourism market will increase to US \$243 billion by 2021 with an annual 8.3 percent growth. So, all-out efforts and a roadmap aimed at promoting Islamic tourism as a global business brand is urgently required," she said.

The prime minister said this while inaugurating the two-day official celebration of "Dhaka OIC City of Tourism 2019" at a city

hotel. She called upon all the OIC member states to work together for flourishing Islamic tourism.

Referring to a report of Thomson Reuters that forecasted tremendous potential of Islamic tourism, the PM said, "Muslim populations globally spent a total of US \$151 billion on travel in 2015 [excluding Hajj and Umrah]. Of the amount, OIC member states contributed to US \$109 billion."

By 2020, the world's Muslim population will be 26 percent of the entire populace while number of Muslim tourists will rise to 180 million from 156 million, she mentioned.

She urged the OIC member states to encourage their private sector

entities in tourism infrastructure and development projects. Islamic economy has already flourished as a new phenomenon, the PM said.

Islamic financing, halal food, pharmaceuticals and cosmetics as well as tourism are among the growing sectors of Islamic economy, she said, adding that enhanced cooperation and partnerships of both public and private sectors of the OIC member states are needed to flourish these sectors.

The prime minister hoped that the celebration of "Dhaka OIC City of Tourism 2019" will open a new door for cooperation.

She mentioned that Bangladesh has diverse tourism attractions such

RESEARCH REPORT ON MILK

DU students protest govt official's remark

DU CORRESPONDENT

A section of Dhaka University students yesterday formed a human chain, protesting remark of a senior official of Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock regarding the recent study on milk conducted by Pharmacy faculty.

Some teachers also joined the human chain, held at the base of Aparajejo Bangla on the campus, under the banner of "Students of Dhaka University".

Speaking at the programme, Dean of Pharmacy faculty, Prof ASM Abdur Rahman termed the remark made by the secretary "very insulting".

"It is a teacher's duty to conduct research. If the teachers are threatened like this without any scrutiny of the research, then how will they be able to conduct research for public interest?" he questioned.

"To verify whether the test results are true or not, one has to conduct another study. No one can make such remark without doing so. A teacher knows better than a secretary about how to conduct a research," said Prof Rahman.

He also said teachers will be discouraged if they are being threatened for conducting research.

"Our researches should be problem-related and public-interest oriented. But if a government official threatens teachers like this, teachers would lose interest in research."

Chayon Barua, a final year student of Microbiology department, said, "It is not logical to make generalised comment on any research result for anyone's own interest."

A senior official of Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock on Tuesday threatened to take legal action against Dhaka University researchers, if they fail to show their study -- that found presence of detergent in milk found at the market -- published in a peer-reviewed journal.

Earlier last month, researchers of DU's Pharmacy faculty and Biomedical Research Centre said they found detergent and antibiotics for humans in packaged milk both pasteurised and unpasteurised -- available in kitchen markets and grocery shops.

DHAKA TODAY

PROTEST Rally demanding Rape Free Bangladesh Venue: Shahbagh Time: 5pm

TRAINING Herpetofauna Survey Techniques Venue: Ramna Park Time: 4pm

DEBATE DU Debate Championship Organiser: Himu Paribahan Venue: Arts Building, University of Dhaka Time: 10am

PROTEST Demanding an increase in the age limit for public and private services Venue: Jatiya Press Club, Topkhana Road Time: 4:30pm

DEMONSTRATION Demanding necessary steps to prevent dengue virus Venue: Shahbagh Time: 11am

CAMPAIGN Cleaning Bangladesh National Zoo Venue: Bangladesh National Zoo Time: 9am

Samsung TV advertisement featuring a cricket match on a large screen and a family watching together. Text includes 'Samsung TV'র সাথে বিশ্বকাপের গ্যালারি আসবে ঘরে' and various product features like Sports Mode, Live TV Recording, and Dolby Digital.