

Staff, drivers confine BRTC chairman for arrears

Call off protest after authority's assurance

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Drivers and staff of different depots of Bangladesh Road Transport Corporation (BRTC) yesterday staged a demonstration, locking the main gate of BRTC head office in the capital's Motijheel, demanding arrears.

Around 100 staffers confined outgoing BRTC chairman Farid Uddin Ahmed Bhuiyan inside the office from around 9am and slashed the tyre of his car during the protest. They also demanded that all drivers who were previously fired, allegedly for demonstrating for their arrears, be reinstated to their jobs.

They withdrew their demo after the chairman agreed to meet their demands around 7pm, BRTC Secretary Noor-e-Alam told The Daily Star last night.

As per the agreement, BRTC will cancel its decision of sacking and transferring drivers, will give salaries from head office on the first day of every month and will release the arrears gradually, he said.

A driver, who participated in the meeting with the chairman, however, said the authority agreed to give all arrears within two months. Earlier in the day, during the demo, a driver told this newspaper, "We have besieged the head office as we came to know today is our chairman's last day at office. We won't allow him to leave until he pays our dues."

On April 2, drivers and staff of 18 depots from across the country formed a human chain in front of Jatiya Press Club to press home their ten-point demand, including payment of their arrears and nationalisation of their jobs.

They had urged the authorities to meet their demands within April 22.

Some 3,200 BRTC employees, including

drivers, get salaries and other benefits like that of government employees. But under the current system, the salaries and benefits of depot employees have to be paid from the earnings of that particular depot.

The lion's share of the depots' earnings come from leasing out buses to private entities and organisations, including educational institutions. The depots provide the drivers with fuel and look after vehicle maintenance.

BRTC chairman Farid Uddin said the issue with arrears came up after a new pay scale was implemented from 2016 which significantly increased the expenditure of the depots.

BRTC has purchased 1,100 vehicles and around 500 buses and trucks have already been added to the fleet which has increased their income, and this will help clear a lot of the arrears within four months, the chairman said.

Asked about the allegation of corruption, the chairman did not give any direct answer. He said they have introduced software-based fleet management system and daily monitoring system to curb irregularities.

Asked about the demonstration at a press conference at his ministry yesterday, Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader said there are some problems but it is not a major issue.

"We are looking into it and will take action in this regard," he said, adding, "There are allegations of indiscipline [in BRTC], and officials concerned of the ministry will look into it."

Meanwhile, public administration ministry on Sunday transferred Farid Uddin to department of archive and library as its director general. Rahamat Ullah Md Dastagir, additional secretary of power division, will replace Farid.

DU's AFFILIATION WITH SEVEN COLLEGES

Students continue demo, lock academic buildings

DU CORRESPONDENT

Agitating students of Dhaka University boycotted classes for the second consecutive day yesterday, demanding the university cancel its affiliation with seven colleges of the capital.

They also padlocked the main entrances of registrar building, arts building, Curzon Hall, Mokarram Bhaban, law faculty, business faculty, Institute of Modern Languages, Institute of Education and Research, and social science building at 8am as part of their demonstrations.

Divided in several groups, the students blocked the keyholes of the locks with glue and put up posters on the entryways of the buildings.

Teachers, students, and staff could not enter, and all academic activities were at a halt.

The students vowed to continue their movement until the vice-chancellor gives written assurance of cancelling the affiliation.

Around 600 aggrieved students brought out a procession from social science building, which paraded different streets of the campus and ended at Shikha Chirantan.

Three hours later, they moved to Curzon Hall and later took position at the base of Raju Memorial Sculpture.

At 1:30pm, they ended their protest for the day and announced that today's programme will start from 7am.

Shakil Miah, a management student and spokesperson of the movement said though they had a four-point demand, now they are pressing only for cancellation of affiliation. "Our protest will continue until the demand is met," he added.

DUCSU LEADERS URGE STUDENTS TO RESUME CLASSES

Ducusu vice-president Nurul Haque Nur and general secretary Golam Rabbani yesterday issued a press statement urging students to return to class.

"Dhaka University Central Students' Union (Ducusu) respects all logical demands of the students, and they have our support in the ongoing demonstration. But it is not possible to take any effective decision right now since the vice-chancellor is abroad," reads the statement.

"To resolve the crisis, Ducusu will take steps after discussing with university administration and education ministry, following the VC's return on Wednesday. We are urging all students to return to class to maintain the environment of education," it added.

The DU affiliated colleges are: Dhaka College, Eden Mohila College, Government Shaheed Suhrawardy College, Kabi Nazrul Government College, Begum Badrunnes Government Women's College, Mirpur Government Bangla College and Government Titumir College.

It was and to some extent still is the go-to place for music aficionados to find latest tracks and revisit old favourites. A passion for music is at the heart of the shop, which has earned it such a great reputation over the years.

And what a collection it boasts -- more than 10,000 compact discs (CD) stacked on the store's shelves, forming a perfect pattern.

Growing up in the 1980s or '90s in Dhaka, amid many uncertainties, one thing was certain -- when it came to music, if you can name it, Rainbow has it (and if not, they'll get it for you).

If you are looking for a rare Pink Floyd or The Beatles or The Rolling Stones record, or a hard to get Jim Morrison or Jimi Hendrix live concert, or need some help to make a decision whether to listen to Black Sabbath or Led Zeppelin, or in a hurry to present a mixtape to someone special -- the good people at Rainbow will do it for you.

This correspondent visited the store on a weekday afternoon. It has shifted from its original spot to a nearby

building and one could tell, business is not what it used to be. But the CDs of Simon and Garfunkel, Dio, Queen, Deep Purple, Eric Clapton, Scorpions, AC/DC, U2, Pearl Jam, Nirvana and many more legendary artists and bands sure made up for the appearance.

At the same time, posters of Bob Dylan, Mark Knopfler and David Gilmour accompanied by other maestros added another dimension to it.

Murad started off with

Rainbow is the brainchild of music enthusiast Abdul Kadir Murad.

"Back in those days, there was no music store in Dhaka for western music," said Murad. He said he decided to open the store to, in a way, introduce a place where youngsters could get access to western bands and their compositions easily.

"At one point, I decided to close the place, but our regular clients did not let it happen," said Murad, who owns the building where Rainbow is located.

After the '90s, when Kabir went abroad, Murad got busy with other business ventures.

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SAFE HAVEN FOR MUSICIANS, FANS

Back in the day, the narrow alley, where Rainbow is situated, used to be the "it" place for bands and fans alike. Every day after sunset, people, mostly youngsters, thronged the area to put in orders for mixtapes or get recommendations from Kabir (affectionately called Kabir bhai) or just to hang out with friends.

Many times, they would also get an opportunity to meet members of famous Bangladeshi bands including LRB, Feedback, Warfaze and Rockstrata.

"I heard about Rainbow from my friends back in my Notre Dame [College] days," said Sheikh Monirul Alam Tipu of Warfaze. "My friends -- Kamal [Warfaze] and Arshad Amin [Rockstrata] -- introduced Rainbow to me, and since then I

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PHOTO OF THE DAY

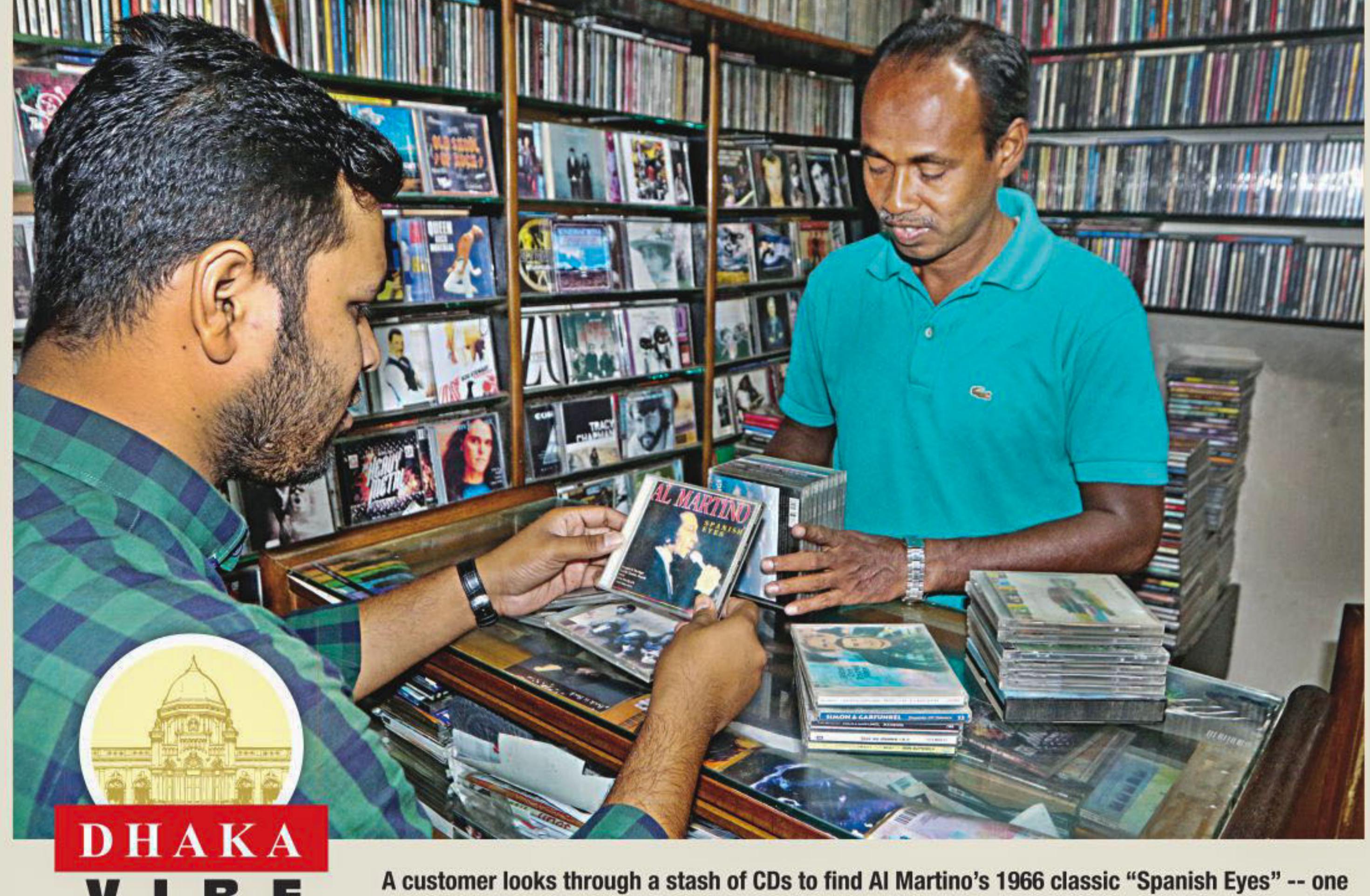
2nd Edition

DHAKA TUESDAY JULY 23, 2019, SRABAN 8, 1426 BS

Rainbow: where mixtape lives on

Record store inspiring generations since 1982

|| MATHEWS CHIRAN ||



A customer looks through a stash of CDs to find Al Martino's 1966 classic "Spanish Eyes" -- one of the many gems that hide in plain sight at the tiny shop, below.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

Rainbow is the brainchild of music enthusiast Abdul Kadir Murad.

"Back in those days, there was no music store in Dhaka for western music," said Murad. He said he decided to open the store to, in a way, introduce a place where youngsters could get access to western bands and their compositions easily.

Murad started off with



around 1,500 vinyl records, his own collection, and converted those to tapes for patrons on request. "I sold each tape for around Tk 40-45. I also provided people with handwritten lyrics."

As he was a huge fan of the rock band Rainbow, led by Ritchie Blackmore, he could not think of any other name for the store, he said smilingly.

Around 1984, another music enthusiast Humayun Kabir joined Rainbow.

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Dhanmondi

Time: 3pm

ACADEMIC SESSION

EdUSA featuring Harvard, MIT, Duke & Minerva

Venue: EMK Center, Dhanmondi

Time: 3:30pm

FAIR

Grand Mirpur Eid Mela

Venue: Setara Convention Hall, Mirpur

Time: 10am-9pm

DHAKA TODAY

'DEROGATORY REMARKS ON HINDUS' Barrister Suman sued

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A case was filed against Barrister Sayedul Haque Suman yesterday on the charge of making derogatory remarks about the Hindu religion and the community.

Guatam Kumar Adbor, a social worker and a resident of the city's Bhashantek, filed the case against Barrister Suman with Dhaka Cyber Tribunal.

Judge Ash Sams Joglul Hossain recorded the statement of Guatam Kumar and took cognisance of the case.

The judge also directed the officer-in-charge of Bhasantek Police Station to investigate the matter and submit a probe report within 30 days.

In the complaint, Guatam said Suman on July 19 gave a Facebook post demeaning the Hindu religion and the community.

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পেট না কেটে অত্যাধুনিক 3D ও 4K ল্যাপারোক্সিপিক মেশিনের সাহায্যে কোলন ও পায়ুপথ ক্যাস্টার অপারেশন



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Columns covered in posters are a common sight, but Dhaka North City Corporation has taken an initiative to change this. These workers were seen cleaning a flyover column in Tejgaon industrial area on Sunday morning.