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BRTA out of its depth

With just 109 inspectors it struggles to ensure fitness checks

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

The Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA) in January 2013 made its biggest recruitment in recent times, 149 people, including 50 vehicle inspectors.

The country had around 18.50 lakh registered vehicles back then. Nearly seven years later, the number has shot up to around 42 lakh but the BRTA could only recruit 19 people during that time and only one of them was a vehicle inspector.

Now, 109 vehicle inspectors are struggling to deal with fitness of all vehicles in the country. Last fiscal year, with the help of 86 mechanical assistants, they checked fitness of 6.47 lakh vehicles.

"The way the number of vehicles is increasing in the country in the last several years, we need at least 1,000 inspectors to complete the job properly," said a BRTA official. The BRTA only has 125 vehicle inspector posts.

The inspectors are always under pressure and the quality of inspections gets compromised often due to the pressure. On top of this, the dearth of vehicle inspectors, cause service seekers to wait a long time for fitness certificates.

But things are going to get much worse in the coming days as the "no fitness, no fuel" measure is likely to go into effect sending thousands of unfit vehicles to the BRTA seeking fitness certificates.

The BRTA has 708 employees now against a sanctioned post of 823. It has been asking road transport and bridges ministry for more people since 2016, but to no avail.

SITUATION TO WORSEN

Following a suo moto rule of the High Court, the BRTA placed a report before it in July, stating that 4.79 lakh vehicles without valid fitness certificates were on the roads.

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Vehicles wait in long queues in front of the BRTA office in the capital's Mirpur for fitness certificates. The photo was taken around 8:00am yesterday. Many of the vehicles had been there long before dawn.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

JU crisis deepens

Teachers, students on strike seeking VC's removal

JU CORRESPONDENT

Protesting teachers and students of Jahangirnagar University began a strike yesterday demanding the vice-chancellor's removal.

Classes and examinations at different departments were barely held as protesters sat in front of the gates of buildings that they had locked from outside.

A section of the protesters sat under a marquee with a banner that read "VC removal platform".

Meanwhile, the administration at a press conference on October 23 said Shibir activists were involved in the demonstrations.

The protesters said such allegations were aimed at stopping the movement.

The demonstrators also marched on campus and blocked Dhaka-Aricha Highway for 10 minutes in the morning. Later, they went in front of the VC's

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Shakib's place in India tour uncertain

SPORTS REPORTER

In the space of five days, Bangladesh Test and T20I skipper Shakib Al Hasan went from being the leader in a players' strike to improve the status of the country's cricketers to plunging the national team's plans into uncertainty on the eve of an important tour of India.

The team is set to depart for New Delhi tomorrow to play three T20Is and two Tests against India, with the first T20I scheduled for November 3, but Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) President Nazmul Hassan could not say for certain whether Shakib would be making the trip.

As of yesterday night, Shakib had missed three out of four days of the national team's training camp, that too without any formal explanation or leave sought from the team management. The camp began on Friday and Shakib only participated for half a day on Saturday, before missing the two practice games in the following two days.

The selectors had named a T20I squad for the tour, but with star opener Tamim Iqbal withdrawing from the tour to be with his pregnant wife, the BCB



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CSE, IT graduates getting more jobs

Finds ADB study in Bangladesh

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA

Computer engineering and IT graduates have a higher job placement rate than any other graduates in the country's job market, a recent study found.

The "Bangladesh: Computer and Software Engineering Tertiary Education in 2018" published by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) tracked the graduates of computer science and engineering (CSE) and institutes of information technology (IIT) from nine universities in Bangladesh.

It was the second such study in South Asian countries and it assessed the employability of the graduates; examined access to and quality and relevance of the CSE/IIT university programmes; and identified possible areas for improvement.

The study found that the "demand for CSE/IIT graduates from the IT/ITES industry is strong, as evidenced by a 77.1% job placement rate for its graduates."

This was much higher than the overall graduate job placement rate of 40 percent.

The research also found that the job placement rate of women was lesser than that of men. For women, the placement rate was 58.6 percent while it was 82.2 percent for their male counterparts. While the placement rate indicator was good, the study, however, showed that many graduates of the two subjects had to wait a year after graduation to get a job, suggesting that fresh graduates were not fully ready for the information technology and information technology enabled services industry.

"While the overall job placement rate of CSE/IIT graduates is higher than the overall average of university graduates, universities need to make efforts to provide relevant jobs soon after graduation," it said.

Of the nine universities surveyed, it was seen that graduates of this discipline from private universities were doing better in the job market than ones from government universities.

For job placements, graduates of Islamic University of Technology (IUT) were in the top position, followed by Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (Buet), BRAC University, and East West University.

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DEC 30 POLLS Menon sorry for 'confusion' over his remarks

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Workers Party President Rashed Khan Menon said he was sorry for the "confusion" created over his recent comments about the December 30 parliamentary polls.

Menon, in a letter responding to the queries of the Awami League-led 14-party alliance yesterday, said his party was and would be in the alliance.

The alliance said it was satisfied with Menon's explanation.

Writing to AL leader Mohammed Nasim, spokesperson for the alliance, Menon said the "confusion" was created as his comments were "exaggerated".

In the letter, he also pointed out that none of his party members was present at the 14-party alliance discussion. After the meeting, the letter was sent to him on October 24 seeking an explanation for his comments on the 11th

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Malpractices hurting overseas job sector

Expat welfare minister opens up, but solution still elusive

PORIMOL PALMA

Irregularities in the overseas jobs sector are making migrant workers go undocumented and are even contributing to the closing of labour markets, said Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment Minister Imran Ahmed on Sunday.

He was speaking at a press conference on the Bangladesh-Seychelles deal on labour recruitment signed on October 21. However, the issues of decline in overseas jobs, suspension of recruitment by Malaysia and the UAE, and deportation of migrants from Saudi Arabia also came up.

"For example, one agent gets work orders to send five workers to a company

overseas. Agents have liability for three months. After that, if the workers flee, the agents don't take the liability. So, they tell the migrants, 'stay there for three months, then you flee...'," he said.

"If two workers flee, the employer sends work orders for two more and get them accordingly. Similarly, the workers are charged Tk two to five lakh. This is one of the types [of fraudulence] we have heard of," the minister said.

Imran also said when female domestic workers go to the Middle East free of cost, there are other problems. For example, he said, in many cases the age of the females is shown either higher or lower than the actual one.

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বাংলাদেশে শিশুদের টিকাদান কর্মসূচীর সফল বাস্তবায়নের স্বীকৃতি হিসেবে গ্লোবাল এ্যালায়েন্স ফর ভ্যাকসিনেশন এন্ড ইমিউনাইজেশন (GAVI) মাননীয় প্রধানমন্ত্রী শেখ হাসিনাকে "ভ্যাকসিন হিরো" সম্মাননায় ভূষিত করে। এই অসামান্য সাফল্যে মাননীয় প্রধানমন্ত্রীকে

“শুভেচ্ছা ও অভিনন্দন”

আমরা জেএমআই সিরিঙ্গেস্ এন্ড মেডিক্যাল ডিভাইসেস্ লিমিটেড সরকারের সম্প্রসারিত টিকাদান কর্মসূচীতে বিগত ১৩ বছর যাবৎ নিরবিচ্ছিন্নভাবে Auto Disable (AD) Syringe সরবরাহ করে আসছি। এই মহতী কার্যক্রমে ক্ষুদ্র অংশীজন হয়ে Auto Disable (AD) Syringe উদ্ভাবন, উৎপাদন ও সরবরাহকারী হিসেবে মাননীয় প্রধানমন্ত্রীর এই অর্জনে আমরাও গর্বিত ও আনন্দিত।

জেএমআই সিরিঙ্গেস্ এন্ড মেডিকেল ডিভাইসেস্ লিমিটেড
জেএমআই ভ্যাকসিন লিমিটেড



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A girl makes her way into a closed-off underpass in the capital's Karwan Bazar area. Inset, a sign next to the underpass informs pedestrians that there is a footbridge only 90 metres away. The underpass was closed due to the ongoing construction of the metro rail. The photo was taken on Sunday.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

2-year-old raped in Bagerhat

3 sued over rape of a fifth grader in Thakurgaon

STAR REPORT

Four people have been sued for raping a two-year-old and a fifth-grader in Bagerhat and Thakurgaon.

In Bagerhat's Mollahat upazila, Fahad Khandakar, 18, of Udaypur Arua Kandi village, was sued on Sunday over the rape of a two-year-old girl.

Mollahat police said on October 22 the mother of the victim took her to see the accused's mother as they were neighbours.

Luring the child by chocolates, Fahad took her to his room and raped her, said Officer-in-Charge Kazi Golam Kabir of Mollahat Police Station.

After the baby was returned to her mother, she found her child was bleeding from her genitals, and confronted Fahad's mother, the officer said.

As the accused's mother requested her not to go

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