

BRINGING DISCIPLINE ON DHAKA ROADS

# Parking policy in the offing

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

To stop haphazard parking of vehicles, reduce traffic congestion and bringing discipline on roads in the capital and its adjacent areas, the government is going to enact a parking policy.

Dhaka Transport Coordination Authority (DTCA) has already prepared a draft and uploaded it on its website, seeking further opinions.

"We have prepared the draft in consultation with stakeholders and will accommodate further opinions from them, if there's any. We will then send it to the [Road Transport and Bridges] ministry," DTCA Executive Director Khandakar Rakibur Rahman told this correspondent on Thursday.

He also expected that an inter-ministerial meeting would finalise the draft before sending it for the cabinet's approval.

The move comes amid an acute crisis of parking space in the city, with only a handful of commercial buildings and markets having spaces designated for parking.

For city buses, there is no designated parking space or terminal. Many vehicles remain parked on roads, resulting in gridlocks.

Besides, the new law -- Road Transport Act 2018 -- stipulates Tk 5,000 fine for parking or picking up and dropping off passengers or goods at any place other than designated for the purpose.

"With the increase of vehicles in Dhaka, tendency to park vehicles haphazardly has increased alarmingly," reads the



Human hauliers parked beside the boundary wall of Lalbagh Fort take up a major part of the road in front of the heritage site. Such illegal and haphazard parking not only creates bottlenecks but also causes nuisance to visitors.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

Habib told The Daily Star recently. "Besides, those designated parking lots earmarked under Detail Area Plan (DAP)-2010 for Dhaka have to be recovered first and used properly," he said.

Habib said the authorities concerned can prepare area-based and time-based policies for parking. "But without ensuring proper implementation of the existing rules and plans, formulation of a policy would

and police -- who would be dealing with parking issues."

Mofiz Uddin Ahmed, additional commissioner (traffic) of Dhaka Metropolitan Police, welcomed the move of enacting a policy for parking. He said DTCA has approved 64 parking spots after DMP has initially proposed 68 places for on-street parking.

"Facilities have to be ensured before taking action against illegal parking. This policy will help us in this regard," he added.

### WHAT THE DRAFT POLICY SAYS

As per the draft, Rajuk, Dhaka south and north city corporations and other local bodies will determine the demand for parking, identify places and get approval from DTCA.

Local and branch roads can be used for parking; time-bound parking system can be introduced; and fees can be charged for parking, reads the draft.

Local authorities can give permission for parking on designated roads for buses, trucks, covered vans and lorries at nighttime. Multi-level parking lots can be considered for densely-populated, commercial and busy administrative areas. A committee comprising representatives

from the DTCA, city corporations, police, local administrations and transport experts will take decision "on-street parking".

Local administration will be entrusted with conducting and maintaining parking facilities and if necessary, they can appoint private entities for that purpose.

They will also set parking fees considering place, timing (peak, off-peak, weekday and weekend), type of vehicles, security and other facilities.

Fees for on-street parking will be higher than off-street parking and pre-paid card for paying the fee would be encouraged. A 30-minute slot can be set for on-street parking.

All types of parking and lease fees as well as fines would be accumulated in the account of local administration and can be used for development of parking system.

Local administration and police will implement the system, with the coordination and approval of DTCA.

DTCA was established on September 2, 2012, to prepare strategic transport plans, provide regular supervision, and coordinate all possible planning for transportation infrastructure development within Dhaka and adjacent districts.

## 'Interference must stop'

Speakers stress independence of judiciary and coequal roles of three state organs

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a symposium yesterday said upholding coequal roles of three state organs and independent functioning of the judiciary are required to serve justice to the disadvantaged.

Bangladesh Institute of Law and International Affairs (Bilia) organised the symposium on "Twelve Years of Separation of Judiciary: Achievements and Challenges" at its auditorium in Dhanmondi.

Presenting a written paper, SM Masum Billah, associate professor of law at Jagannath University, said a major threat to independent judiciary emanates from the government.

In the judicial appointment process and its administrative function, the government plays a central role in influencing and tempting the process and the outcome, he alleged.

"Therefore, the protection is mainly against the executive," he added, presenting a paper on the topic -- "Oil and Water Cannot Mix: The Separation of Powers in Bangladesh and the Masdar Hossain Legacy".

In 1995, Masdar Hossain along with many other judicial officers who were judges in different lower courts, filed a writ petition which later came to be known as the Masdar Hossain case.

In 1999, the Supreme Court delivered a landmark judgement in the case, laying out a roadmap to separate the judiciary from the executive. After a lapse of several years, the judiciary came out of the control of the executive on November 1, 2007.

At yesterday's symposium, Masum added, "It [the judiciary] must also be free from powerful non-governmental interference."

Addressing the discussion, Prof Mizanur Rahman of Dhaka University's law faculty said the judiciary has to be independent "to the extent it is able to reflect the state's expectations".

At the same time, the state is the one that people achieved through the Liberation War and its expectation has to reflect the expectations of the people, predominantly the poor, said Prof Mizanur, also former chairman of the National Human Rights Commission.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

### DRAFT POLICY AT A GLANCE

- Time-bound parking system
- Fees to vary based on vehicle, area, time
- On-street, off-street parking facilities
- Local, branch roads for parking
- Multi-level parking lots for busy areas

introduction of the draft policy.

The policy is going to be introduced to solve traffic congestion by developing parking management, modernisation and upgradation of the parking system with coordinated implementation and bringing discipline by charging fees, the draft added.

However, Iqbal Habib, a prominent urban designer, said the policy would not bring much benefit unless Bangladesh National Building Code and Dhaka Imarat Nirman Bidhimala are implemented properly.

As per those rules, all residential and commercial buildings, educational institutions and offices must have parking facilities as per the nature of occupancy of those buildings, which are largely ignored,

Without ensuring proper implementation of the existing rules and plans, formulation of a policy would not reap much benefit.

Iqbal Habib  
Urban designer

not reap much benefit," Habib feared.

Asked, Khandakar Rakibur said those rules would be a part of the policy.

Zakir Hossain Mazumder, additional executive director of DTCA, said, "We need a policy for proper coordination among the agencies including city corporations

## DBBL hands out scholarships to 3,018 students

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dutch-Bangla Bank Limited yesterday at a programme awarded scholarships to 3,018 meritorious and underprivileged students, who passed HSC or equivalent exams last year, and are studying at undergraduate level.

The bank organised the event at Shaheed Suhrawardy Indoor Stadium in the capital's Mirpur. Law Minister Anisul Huq, chief guest at the event, handed over the scholarships among students.

Anisul termed DBBL's initiative -- of awarding scholarships to economically insolvent and disadvantaged students -- outstanding. He congratulated the scholarship awardees and expected that they would dedicate themselves to serving the nation.

"I hope many of you will be able to introduce scholarships for economically insolvent and disadvantaged students in the future," he told awardees.

Appreciating the scholarship scheme, the minister said such a programme is a unique example of helping meritorious and poor students. He expected that other institutions would come forward with such

endeavours.

Sayem Ahmed, chairman of DBBL's board of directors, and Abul Kashem Md Shirin, the bank's managing director, also spoke at the ceremony.

Scholarship awardees -- Rajshahi University students Ujjal Hossain and Mahmud Hossain; Eden Mohila College student Munmun Akter; Khulna Medical College student Sanjida Jahan; and Jahangirnagar University student Sajib Chowdhury -- shared their struggles to continue education, faced with due to financial constraints, and how DBBL stood beside them.

These 3,018 students will receive a Tk 3,000 monthly scholarship, alongside annual stipends of Tk 5,000 for reading materials and Tk 1,000 for clothing expenses.

DBBL has so far awarded the scholarships to a total of 62,752 students since 2001. Of them, 19,524 students are currently continuing their studies through the scholarship.

Some 90 percent of the scholarship holders are from rural areas, while 50 percent are female students, according to the scholarship policy.

## Children imagine a better country

Winners of art competition awarded

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

"Every child is an artist. The problem is how to remain an artist once we grow up."

True to the famous saying by Pablo Picasso, The Daily Star in association with Arla Foods Ltd organised "Imagine Nation", an inter-school art contest, with the theme "How our children foresee Bangladesh".

Fifteen English-medium schools participated in the competition in November, which was organised on occasion of Universal Children's Day. Top 30 selected artworks were exhibited yesterday in the final round held at The Daily Star Centre.

Arman Bhuiya Arko,

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4



Children with their prizes and certificates after conclusion of the inter-school art competition "Imagine Nation". The final round was held at the The Daily Star Centre yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR



Law Minister Anisul Huq hands over scholarship to a student at Shaheed Suhrawardy Indoor Stadium in Mirpur. Dutch-Bangla Bank Limited yesterday awarded scholarships to 3,018 meritorious and underprivileged students.

PHOTO: STAR

## DMCH nurse loses battle for life

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A senior nurse of Dhaka Medical College Hospital, who hanged herself at her workplace on Thursday, died at the hospital yesterday.

Mousumi Dutta (27) was found by her colleagues in critical condition on the third floor of the hospital, after she allegedly hanged herself from the ceiling fan of a room with a gauze bandage, following an argument with her husband on that day, said police.

Abul Hasan, officer-in-charge of Shahbagh Police Station, said according to Mousumi's colleagues, she had a heated conversation on the phone around 7:30pm on that day.

At one point, she smashed her phone and locked herself up inside a post-operative room, the OC said.

She died at the intensive care unit of the hospital around 11:30am yesterday, said Abul Hasan.

Police arrested her husband Sanjay Dutta from DMCH after her death.

Mousumi's father Shaibal Das filed a case against Sanjay for instigating her daughter to take her own life.

## Help govt keep your city clean

LGRD minister urges Dhaka dwellers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Local Government and Rural Development (LGRD) Minister Tazul Islam yesterday sought cooperation from all dwellers of Dhaka city, to keep the capital clean and free of air pollution.

It is undeniable that city dwellers face various problems in their everyday life, including pollution and traffic congestion, but the government is not slacking; it is trying its best to solve the issues, he said.

"We have taken several initiatives to improve the city's quality of living, but our efforts will not be fruitful if the dwellers aren't aware and don't know how to keep their surroundings clean," added Tazul.

The minister made the remarks while speaking at a programme held at Cirdap auditorium in the capital. Nagar Unnayan Sangbadik Forum, an association of urban development journalists, organised

the event to introduce its new executive committee -- elected for 2020-2021 tenure. Speaking at the programme, Dhaka North City Corporation Mayor Atiqul Islam said it is a challenge to turn unplanned Dhaka into a planned city, but it is possible if all work together.

About his participation in the upcoming Dhaka city polls, Atiqul said, "If I get nomination, I will use my experience -- which I have gathered in the last nine months -- to serve the city dwellers."

"But if I am not nominated, I will support the candidate who will be selected by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, also the president of Awami League," he added.

Jatiya Press Club General Secretary Farida Yasmin, Bangladesh Institute of Planners General Secretary Adil Mohammed Khan and Nagar Unnayan Sangbadik Forum President Matin Abdullah also spoke at the event, among others.