



Even though battery-run rickshaws are banned in the capital due to safety concerns, they are still moving in the alleys at full speed. These vehicles pose great danger to pedestrians as the three-wheelers are not designed to move so fast, and accidents occur because people can't comprehend their speed on the roads.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

## BATTERY-RUN RICKSHAWS

# Danger lurks in the alleys

HELEMUL ALAM

Shahida Quader, a resident of Khilgaon area, is waiting for an operation on her ankle, as it didn't heal after two months of treatment. She had been injured while standing near a footpath at the Khilgaon crossing, as a speeding battery-run rickshaw ran over her right leg. "The rickshaw driver lost control of the vehicle as he was driving it at an unnecessarily high speed inside the locality," said Shahida.

On August 24, Mehjabin Islam Bhuiyan Maria, a second-grader of Jurain Ashraf Master High School, died and another child was injured after a battery-run rickshaw hit them on their way to school.

"The accident happened around 7:30am in front of the school. The rickshaw was speeding. Seeing a speed-breaker, the driver braked hard suddenly, causing the vehicle to flip over and land on the two schoolgirls crossing the road," Proloy Kumar Saha, officer-in-charge of Kadamtali Police Station, told The Daily Star.

Even though such vehicles are banned in the capital, they are still moving in the alleys at full speed.

Last year, Dhaka South City Corporation Mayor Sheikh Fazle Noor Taposh announced to take legal action against such vehicles.

However, the situation did not improve since then, rather the number of battery-run vehicles has increased.

Dhaka North City Corporation Mayor Md Atiqul Islam, on August 3, made a similar announcement.

Even the High Court on March 8, 2015 banned such vehicles across the country, as they have no proper licence.

However, these unauthorised vehicles continue to ply the capital's streets.

According to sources, crores of taka

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## State organs are now politicised: Fakhrul

UNB, Dhaka

B N P Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam

Alamgir yesterday alleged that the current government has divided the state organs through politicisation.

"If you go to court, you won't get justice. If you go to law enforcers, you won't get security there, as you will be asked whether you belong to BNP or Awami League. If you are with BNP, then you won't get any cooperation. Rather, they will file a case against you," he said.

Dr Khandaker Mosharraf Foundation arranged the programme at Dhaka Reporters' Unity (DRU) in memory of Gazi Mazharul Anwar, a member of BNP chairperson's advisory council, who died on September 4.

"The government has divided the entire nation in the last 12 to 15 years. You won't find a place where there is no division based on political identity," Fakhrul said.

"I often say we're going through a bad time. They [govt] are ruining everything by indulging in corruption, misdeeds and lies," he observed.

Recalling the contributions of Anwar, Fakhrul described him as a lighthouse. "He was like a star to us. We're inspired by his songs, character and works."

BNP standing committee member Khandkar Mosharraf Hossain, chairperson of the foundation, also spoke.

# 'Health insurance would be a relief'

Two public universities introduced scheme for students, rest show little to no progress

SHEIKH TAJUL ISLAM TAJ

Sheikh Sadli Al Zadid, a third-year student at Dhaka University, had frequently suffered from hernia-related pain for years. But when the condition turned severe, his doctor suggested getting admitted to a hospital.

The treatment process required quite some money, but he did not need to worry about it, thanks to a health insurance scheme introduced by his university.

"After returning from the hospital, I went to our health insurance section and made the claim. A month later, I got Tk 25,000 for my treatment," said Jahid, who studies law.

In October last year, DU authorities launched the health insurance scheme for students. Under the scheme, regular (honours and master's) students aged below 28 get treatment from listed hospitals after paying Tk 270 in premium annually, according to the insurance section.

Each student is eligible for a maximum insurance benefit of Tk 50,000 per year for hospital admission. In the case of outdoor treatment, there is an annual allocation of Tk 10,000 per student.

Following DU, Rajshahi University also introduced an insurance scheme for its regular students in June this year. The students will have to deposit annual premium of Tk 250 to avail the facility, said sources.

Under this scheme, students will get up to a maximum of Tk 80,000 if they fall ill and are admitted to hospital, while Tk 2 lakh will be provided to the family in the case of death.

Apart from those studying at DU and RU, most public university students have not had the good fortune of availing insurance service amid the absence of such a scheme.

Students of other universities, especially Jahangirnagar University and Chittagong University, said a large number of them come from lower-income backgrounds, for which it gets even harder for them to get medical treatment.

"We feel vulnerable. A backup like health insurance would have been a great relief for us," said Solaiman Hossain, a student of Chittagong University.

"We should take lessons from Covid-19 and bring all regular students under health insurance," he added.

A student of Jahangirnagar University (JU) said a few months ago, he went to a doctor's chamber with some dermatological issues.

"The doctor asked me to get some pathological tests done,

pathological centre at all universities, with proper facilities and qualified doctors and nurses," said the former JU professor.

Prof AA Mamun, former president of JU Teachers' Association, said a health insurance policy will make the students feel secure and mentally strong.

"We, the teachers, have medical insurance, and our children are covered under the scheme. But our students who are also like our children cannot avail such facilities, which is frustrating," he said, calling upon the authorities to take immediate steps to introduce health insurance for students.

JU Vice Chancellor Prof Nurul Alam said they are aware of the demand made by students for

**"We feel vulnerable. A backup like health insurance would have been a great relief for us. We should take lessons from Covid-19 and bring all regular students under health insurance."**

SOLAIMAN HOSSAIN, student of Chittagong University

which I could not do due to financial constraints. If we have health insurance like that of Dhaka University, it would have been very helpful for me," he said, wishing anonymity.

A top official from Jahangirnagar University said, "Children of teachers and officers of this campus are under the scheme. Starting this for students will be difficult if no manpower and special attention is allocated."

Renowned economist and academician Anu Mohammad said the authorities of other public universities will have to be more attentive to ensure students' healthcare.

"What is more important is developing a medical and

health insurance.

"I forwarded the copy of students' demand to our registrar for further consideration, so that we can launch a health insurance policy. We will put forward the proposal at our meeting as well," he said.

Chittagong University VC Dr Shireen Akhter said they also want to introduce health insurance for the students.

"We are trying our best, and I can assure you that we are going to sign a deal with an insurance company to this end. This will be helpful for our students," she said.

Dr Dil Afroza Begum, acting chairperson of University Grants Commission, said it is the decision is up to the university authorities.

## ROOPPUR PLANT Second reactor vessel to be installed on Oct 16

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The nuclear reactor pressure vessel (RPV) for the second unit of Rooppur Nuclear Power Plant (RNPP) is to be installed on October 16, said Minister of Science and Technology Yeafesh Osman.

Attending as chief guest, he revealed the date at a programme organised by Atomic Reporters Bangladesh (ARB) at Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Novo Theatre yesterday.

In the seminar titled "Possibilities and Challenges of Atomic Energy in Bangladesh in New Global Perspective", the minister said Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will inaugurate the RPV virtually.

"Around 20,000 people will get job opportunities at the nuclear project. The authorities even spent millions of dollars and installed core catchers at the plant, to ensure extra security," said Yeafesh.

Mohammad Shawkat Akbar, project director of Rooppur Nuclear Power Plant, said, "We have to think about the alternative of gas due to the rapid decrease in gas reserves."

Senior Secretary for science and technology ministry Ziaul Hasan, in his special guest's speech, said, "We have to move forward with green energy like nuclear plants to achieve the government's goal of controlling carbon emissions." He also mentioned that Bangladesh can start repaying Russia's debt after two years of launching the power plant.

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## 'Opportunities for all youths, in spite of class difference' Says Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury at Bangladesh Youth Summit 2022

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Not all the youths of the country get the same opportunities due to class barriers, and this discrimination needs to end to ensure their development, said Speaker Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury yesterday.

"Those of us who have worked on youth development with various organisations must address this disparity. Opportunities related to education, health and employment must be accessible to all so that no one is left behind," she added.

She made the remarks as the chief guest at Bangladesh Youth Summit 2022, organised by Dhruvotara Youth Development Foundation (DYDF) and supported by Manusher Jonno Foundation at Krishibid Institute Bangladesh.



"Our youths have a lot of potential. When thinking about their development, we need to take the challenges coming with globalisation into account as well," said the Speaker.

ICT State Minister Zunaid Ahmad Palak also joined the summit and discussed the opportunities that were made by the ICT Division targeting the young population of the country.

"ICT policy was formulated in 2009, which had 306 issues to be addressed — all related to the development of the youth. In continuation of that policy, ICT was introduced in the national curriculum as a separate subject," he said.

Lawmaker Shirin Akhter also attended the summit and urged the youth to work against communalism and all forms of discrimination.

"The skilled youth must retain the patriotism and cultural practices of the country," she said.

Rabindra University Vice Chancellor, also the chair of DYDF, said the youth can contribute to

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This is the Kutubkhali canal, or at least, it used to be. Despite multiple drives by authorities to keep the canal clean, locals have time and time again remained ignorant and kept dumping polythene and other wastes into the waterbody. This photo was taken in Jatrabari's Doniya area recently.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

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