**Dhaka traffic getting worse day by day**

The bustling city of Dhaka is emblematic of urban dynamism and cultural richness. However, its undeniable charm is often overshadowed by the chaotic and unmanageable traffic situation that plagues its streets. The dire state of traffic in Dhaka is a complex issue that is caused by the pervasive unruliness among road users.  
  
According to news reports, the recent ranking of Dhaka as the fifth worst city in the world for traffic in the Numbeo's Traffic Index by City 2023 is a disheartening reminder for us. This stigma highlights the urgent need for comprehensive reforms in traffic management and infrastructure development to alleviate the chaos that has become an unfortunate hallmark of Dhaka's urban landscape.  
  
In comparison to the top four cities on the list - Lagos, San Jose, Colombo, and Los Angeles - Dhaka's traffic situation is exacerbated by a unique set of challenges stemming from its immense population density, inadequate road infrastructure, and insufficient traffic management systems. The figures from the 2022 and 2023 rankings further emphasize the worsening state of affairs, with an increase in the average one-way commute time from 57.8 minutes to 61 minutes. Netherlands' Amsterdam, which boasts the least traffic congestion globally, stands in stark contrast to Dhaka's situation.

While Dhaka struggles with over 1.81 million registered vehicles in the capital and a staggering population of over 22 million, Amsterdam's efficient traffic management and well-maintained road infrastructure contribute to its smooth flow of traffic. The disparity in traffic performance between these two cities underscores the importance of effective urban planning, infrastructure investment, and policy implementation.

The dire consequences of Dhaka's traffic crisis are not confined to mere inconvenience; they reverberate throughout the economy and quality of life of its residents. The 2018 study conducted by BUET's Accident Research Institute revealed that the city's traffic congestion wasted approximately 5 million work hours that year, amounting to a staggering loss of Tk37,000 crore to the economy. Moreover, the subsequent research conducted by the government's BIDS and the Dhaka-based think tank Policy Research Institute (PRI) estimates that 6-10% of the country's GDP is indirectly forfeited to traffic chaos each year. These financial losses underscore the imperative for immediate and effective interventions to address the systemic issues undermining Dhaka's traffic management.

Spending more time at the tollbooth as the buses wander around the Gulistan side this traffic jam is like a curse. Even after taking various initiatives to alleviate the terrible suffering of traffic congestion, the city is not getting rid of anything.  
The damage caused by traffic congestion is irreparable. Due to the traffic jam, the speed of vehicles has dropped below 10 km per hour. As a result, it takes twice-three times the time to go out for any work. City dwellers are suffering physically and mentally from being stuck in traffic for hours.  I also go through the same situation every day.  
  
Mayor Hanif Flyover was built to get rid of the unbearable traffic congestion in the capital. But the flyover which is built to reduce the traffic jam remains on that flyover. This traffic jam is a daily occurrence.  
  
The reasons behind this flyover's traffic jam are for the vehicles as they are parked at various places above the face of the flyover, and passengers are moved, forcing various vehicles to board the flyover, spending more time at the tollbooth, etc. In this, the passengers have to bear unlimited suffering while walking on the flyover paying money. Even when getting down from Hanif flyover, terrible traffic jam is now a daily companion. At the Gulistan end of the flyover, buses ply erratically causing traffic jams. Additionally, almost every day the public transport has to be stuck in long traffic from Sayedabad to Gulistan for hours.  
  
As a result, passengers are not getting the benefit for which they are paying extra money. Getting down from the Gulistan-Jatrabari Mayor Hanif flyover, commuters are to face a traffic jam. There is daily traffic jam at Gulistan Point. Sometimes that gridlock is several kilometres long behind the flyover. It is like buying suffering with extra money. Local buses coming along the Dhaka-Chittagong highway are standing at the entrance of the flyover to pick and drop passengers. This is causing traffic congestion at the entrance of the flyover. Even going down to Golap Bagh in the evening, you have to get stuck in traffic every day. At the same time, vehicles on the lower road are diverted in front of the flyover. Because of this, a terrible traffic jam is created.  
  
The traffic jam in Gulistan is now a threat to passengers entering Dhaka via Jatrabari-Demra, Dhaka-Chittagong highway, Padma bridge through Dholaipar and other commuters who regularly commute to work on this route from surrounding areas. During peak hours, the Hanif flyover is often jam-packed for several kilometres. After getting down from the Hanif flyover, the some gangs have occupied all the footpaths of the surrounding roads. In addition to setting up shops on the sidewalks, hawkers also arranged their products in several rows on the road. Roads are narrowed due to illegal encroachments, causing serious disruption to traffic. Vehicles have to spend a lot of time leaving this area due to obstructions on this small road coming down from the flyover. This has an impact on the Hanif flyover. The queue of vehicles behind is getting longer. Slow collection of tolls at toll plazas is also responsible for congestion.  
  
The complex nature of Dhaka's traffic crisis necessitates a multi-pronged approach that addresses not only the symptoms but also the root causes of the problem. Improved traffic management systems, stricter law enforcement, and investments in modern infrastructure are all critical components of a comprehensive solution. It's imperative to engage stakeholders from government bodies, urban planning experts, local communities, and transportation operators to collaboratively develop strategies that will alleviate the congestion and promote sustainable mobility.  
  
The underlying issue contributing to the Dhaka traffic nightmare is the low level of adherence to traffic regulations. The rampant flouting of rules, from disobeying traffic signals to ignoring speed limits, not only jeopardizes the safety of all road users but also perpetuates a culture of impunity. When the majority of drivers believe they can get away with violating rules, the entire traffic ecosystem suffers. It's a vicious cycle: unruliness breeds chaos, which, in turn, makes individuals more likely to act recklessly.  
  
Unruliness isn't limited to just vehicular traffic; pedestrians and public transportation systems also fall victim to this behaviour. Jaywalking and disregard for pedestrian crossings have become the norm, endangering the safety of those on foot. Public buses and rickshaws add to the disorder, often stopping abruptly and creating bottlenecks. The absence of dedicated lanes for buses and cycle rickshaws further contributes to congestion, making the overall traffic situation even worse.  
  
The consequences of Dhaka's unruly traffic extend beyond mere inconvenience. The perpetual gridlocks and congestion result in wasted time, lost productivity, and increased stress levels among commuters. Air quality is adversely affected, leading to a rise in respiratory problems due to prolonged exposure to vehicular emissions. Furthermore, the economic toll of the traffic chaos cannot be underestimated, as businesses suffer from delayed deliveries and reduced efficiency. The overall quality of life in Dhaka is compromised as its residents grapple with the daily challenges posed by the traffic nightmare.  
  
The worsening traffic situation in Dhaka is a complex issue with far-reaching implications for its residents, economy, and environment. The rampant unruliness among road users serves as a primary catalyst for the chaos that reigns on the streets. To reclaim the city's vitality and efficiency, a concerted effort is required to cultivate a culture of discipline, adherence to rules, and respect for fellow road users. By addressing the underlying causes of the traffic crisis and implementing strategic solutions, Dhaka can emerge as a model of organized urban mobility, enhancing the quality of life for its residents and setting a positive example for other cities facing similar challenges.  
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