

Hanging on to slim hopes

Over the past few months in school, Swapna has learnt multiplication, a bit of history of the nation's freedom struggle, poems in Bangla and a touch of **English language.**

CITY CORRESPONDENT

A buzzing sound of recitation pours out from a small room. Inside, a few children are reading a Bangla poem, trying to get the hang of it. Outside, a signboard reading Non-formal Education for Street Children is hung on the wall. A small room at a slum at Paribagh houses the school for 'the children of the dark'.

No chairs and tables are there -- a throwback to the ancient schools. Sitting beside a small blackboard with an amateur drawing on it, students take lessons from their teacher. The lady teacher, on a Tk 800 monthly payroll, teaches 30 students in each shift. The school has two shifts, one in the morning and the other in the evening. Each shift runs for two hours.

sored by different non-government organisations (NGOs) are spread across the divisional headquarters of Dhaka, Chittagong, Rajshahi and Khulna.

ACLAB, an NGO, runs 15 such schools located at the different parts of the city. The curriculum of the school covers Bangla, English, mathematics and social science. The students attend a drawing class once

a week. They have no dress code unlike other schools. Their ragged look and pale faces say it all -- many of their dreams have died.

But, they are starting to dream afresh.

Swapna, who is in the evening shift, spends early hours of the day in making a living for themselves. For a house working as a domestic help.

As many as 4,815 schools sponout her father to run their sevenmember family.

Over the past few months in school, she has learnt multiplication, a bit of history of the nation's freedom struggle, poems in Bangla and a touch of English language. Her preferred lesson? Swapna starts reciting a very popular Bangla rhyme Aievaiev chand mama

Tip diey ja Chander kapaley chand Tip diey ja...

She went on until the rhyme ended.

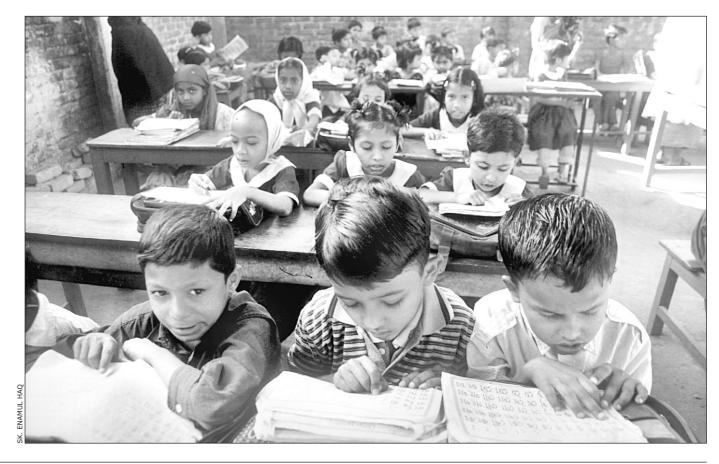
Majibar, Asma, Nipu, Shariful and others also have their preferred lessons. When they express themselves or talk about their academic goal, they ooze confidence. And why not? Some of them are already

With her little earnings, she can help instance, Asma sells flowers on the street under the scorching sun.

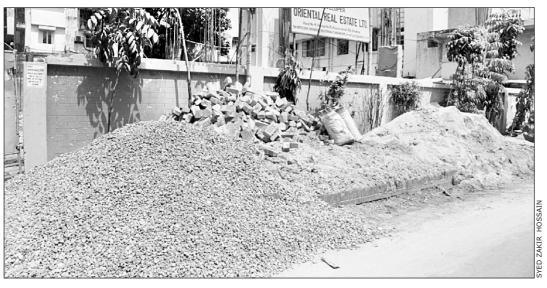
Majibar's father, who sells pickles and ice cream, is now lying sick in a shanty at a corner of Shahbagh. Majibar used to help his father during the rush hour. But the scenario now is different. Earlier, his father would fetch the ice cream from the factory at Central Road.

Now Majibar is compelled to take the responsibility of bringing the supply of ice creams. After the day's work, he attends his school. He barely misses the roll call in the class. Their stories have almost a similar

start, but the end may not be so. They have been thrown on a rough road and they will settle for it. But they don't want to live rough, not even for a change.



Walkway woe continues



Concrete and sand piles dominate sidewalks

CITY CORRESPONDENT

Most people in the city have stopped using sidewalks even for a short

any help from the local ward commissioners. However, Estate Officer Ruhul Amin admitted DCC never met with

often see building materials kept on the footpath facing the site for days on end, usually for about three years. Some footpaths have been

On and off with outage

CITY CORRESPONDENT

Traditionally nor'westers or a sultry day followed by cool evening breeze should be the signal that summer is arriving. But for Dhaka city residents, the new season is announced through frequent load-shedding and power outage.

"Power cut is so common that it has now become an integral part of our life," says Masud Rana, who lives in Madartek. "We are satisfied by resigning to the fact that at least we are getting electricity for some time during the twenty-four hours.

"Load shedding has compelled us to change our daily household routine," said Nasreen Haque, a housewife living in Indira Road. "Every morning there will be no electricity for an hour at a specific time. We try to complete the chores that require electrical support before that 'dreaded' hour.

"Using home appliances run by electricity is almost impossible these days as you can never

be sure when there'll be a power failure," she added. power fluctuation and Frequ failure can cause serious damage to electronic goods and that compounds the misery for the city dwellers.

studying but that is also the time when load-shedding happens most," snarled Javed Ahmed an HSC examinee living in Elephant Road. "It becomes quite impossible to study under candle light in unbearable heat.'

The power distribution system in many parts of the city is unable to utilise its full capacity, which causes power outage. Also areas like Mirpur, Mohammadpur, Jatrabari, Khilgaon, Malibaag have high rate of power pilferage. This pilferage takes its toll on legal consumers and the system fails due to overload.

However, the Dhaka Electricity Supply Authority (DESA) officials claim that power outage is due to lack of proper

transmission lines.

"Basically load shedding is taking place in those areas where the sub-stations have limited capacity to supply power," said DESA Chairman M A Rab. "We still try not to switch off power of a certain area for a long duration at a stretch," he added.

The DESA chief informed that substations will be set up at Lalmatia, Green Road, Moghbazar, Sayedabad, Madartek, Taltala, Bashundhara, Joarsahara and Uttara very soon to ease the problem.

There are allegations that the DESA discriminates between the posh residential areas and the rest of Dhaka. Rab however dismissed that accusation. "The fact is that places like the Mintu

Road has a comparatively low density of residents. So power consumption is less there than other areas. Therefore loadshedding is not necessary at such places. The situation is better there not because ministers and government high-ups reside there but because of the number of

people living in that area." Despite claims and promises of the power distribution authority, every summer there's no change in the lives of Dhaka residents. That's why the 'Boishakhi' folklore has now been replaced by the more pragmatic view that load-shedding is the dawn of summer.



distance as hawkers and hazards hold them back from taking a walk along the road

Sheer neglect by the authorities in management of the footpaths has all the more added to the downside of sidewalks

Dhaka City Corporation (DCC), responsible for maintenance and cleanliness of the city footpaths, has seldom taken any co-ordinated initiative to recover the walkways and give the city dwellers a chance to walk.

Officials at DCC's Estate Department said they often conduct "footpath cleansing drives" but such efforts help little to keep the walkway clean. He said they do not get

the ward commissioners on the matter but said he had talked to 'some commissioners about it". Footpaths in busy commercial

areas have been taken over by street marvel floors. hawkers. In semi-commercial and residential suburbs, footpaths are virtually unusable. For instance, on footpaths on Satmasjid Road at Dhanmondi cars are parked, makeshift shops built and construction materials dumped.

In residential areas, construction materials mostly occupy the footpaths. Developers use the stretch of the footpath in front of the construction site to keep cement, rod, bamboo and other materials. Dhanmondi, Lalmatia and Gulshan

strangely designed by the builder to suit his needs. In many cases users trip and fall hitting a raised rod or bamboo or slip on the slippery

Rubbish littering the footpaths is a common public nuisance which gets even worse when DCC workers leave piles of sludge for several days in the process of cleaning the surface drains

The reason that hundreds of developers dare to block the sidewalk to make room for vehicles and building materials is down to the apathy of the authorities to address the issue, said most city dweller who use walkways.

"Whether it's a refrigerator or a microwave oven, everything becomes vulnerable because of voltage fluctuation and load-shedding," said Farhana Sayeed of Mirpur, an area where suffering is at its most. "We have to remain constantly aware to switch off electric goods at home when the voltage is low," she added.

Most of the consumers found lack of electricity as the main reason behind the water crisis since motor pumps cannot be run without it. Many consumers in different areas complain of the sapping heat as they can't turn on their fans or air-conditioners.

The worst victims of power failure are however, the students, especially the SSC and HSC examinees. "Evening is the main time for

flighttiming, essential prices&handynumbers

MARKET PRICE		FLIGH	T TIM	ING														LIBRARY & INFO
Vegetables (Tk Per Kg) Tomato- 16 Potato- 10	Jira- 120 Dhania- 30 Daruchini- 140	Sunday KA-110 KU-281	ARR ARR	0605 0610	HKG-DAC KWI-DAC	Monday BG-013 BG-056	DEP ARR	0145 0610	DAC-DXB-LHR FCO-ORY-DAC	BG-035 BG-095 BG-027	DEP DEP DEP	1815 1830 1900	DAC-JED DAC-CCU DAC-CGP-AUH	DEP SV-807 BG-092 BG-070	1050 DEP ARR DEP	DAC-KUL 1200 1210 1215	DAC-RUH-MED CCU-DAC DAC-SIN	Libraries, Cultural and
Borboti, Beans- 20 Dherosh, Okra-16 Jhinga- 20	Salt- 11 Soyabean- 46-49/Litre Butter oil- 210	GF-258 BG-032 KA-111	ARR ARR DEP	0615 0630 0705	AUH-DAC KHI-DAC DAC-HKG	BA-145 GF-258 BG-012	ARR ARR ARR	0600 0615 0620	LHR-DAC AUH-DAC JFK-DRU-DAC	BG-704 BG-079 BG-096	ARR ARR ARR	1900 2000 2040	KTM-DAC HKG-DAC CCU-DAC	TG-321 BG-026 TG-322	ARR ARR DEP	1250 1330 1400	BKK-DAC DOH-DXB-CGP-DAC DAC-BKK	Information Centres
Chichinga- 16 Jali Lau- 25/Piece Lau- 25/30 (Midium/Big)	Ghee- 280 Mustard oil- 70 Dalda- 50	KU-282 GF-259 QR-344	DEP DEP ARR	0730 0730 0730 0730	DAC-KWI DAC-AUH DOH-DAC	BG-006 GF-259 QR-344	ARR DEP ARR	0705 0730 0730	LHR-DAC DAC-AUH DOH-DAC	BG-085 SQ-435	ARR ARR	2115 2140	SIN-BKK-DAC SIN-DAC	SV-896 IC-723 BG-014	ARR ARR ARR	1400 1500 1515	RUH-DAC CCU-DAC LHR-DXB-DAC	Central Public Library- 8626001-4,
Patol- 16 Lemon- 5/Piece Peas- 10/(450 gm packet)	Tea- 120-160 Sugar- 28 Wheat- 15	QR-345 BG-030	DEP ARR	0840 0845	DAC-DOH DXB-BOM-DAC	BA-144 KB-126 BG-040	DEP ARR ARR	0800 0800 0830	DAC-LHR PBH-DAC RUH-DAC	BG-025 MH-196 BG-011	DEP ARR DEP	2145 2220 2245	DAC-DOH-DXB KUL-DAC DAC-DXB-BRU-JFK	IC-724 SV-811 BG-014 BG-093	DEP DEP DEP DEP	1550 1600 1640 1710	DAC-CCU DAC-RUH DAC-ZYL DAC-CCU	Shishu Academy- 9564128 Shilpakala Academy- 8614673
Sajna-25 Eggplant-16(Black), 20 (White)	Masur Dal- 42 Pulse- 20	EK-336 BG-019 SV-804	ARR DEP ARR	0935 0950 1000	DXB-DAC DAC-CCU JED-RUH-DAC	QR-345 EK-582 KB-126	DEP ARR DEP	0840 0840 0840	DAC-DOH DXB-DAC DAC-RGN-BKK	SQ-435 MH-197 BG-001	DEP DEP DEP	2300 2335 2345	DAC-SIN DAC-KUL DAC-DXB-LHR	BG-035 BG-104 BG-094	DEP ARR ARR	1815 1910 1920	DAC-DOC DAC-JED ZYL-DAC CCU-DAC	Bangla Academy- 8619550 Islamic Foundation- 9550280, 9556407
Koralla- 20 Pudina Leaf- 120 Cabbage- 15	Meat & Egg Beef- 80	BG-018 EK-336 BG-038	ARR DEP ARR	1005 1050 1100	LHR-DXB-DAC DAC-KUL JED-CGP-DAC	BG-084 BG-022 BG-091	DEP ARR DEP	0900 0930 0950	DAC-BKK-SIN MCT-CGP-DAC DAC-CCU BAH-KWI-DAC	BG-082	DEP	2345	DAC-DAD-LINA DAC-KUL	BG-039 EK-337 EK-337	DEP ARR DEP	1930 1940 2050	DAC-RUH KUL-DAC DAC-DXB	Nazrul Institute- 9114602 Ford Foundation- 8116133
Green banana- 10 (Hali) Green papaya- 10 Lati- 16	Mutton- 140 Chicken- 70 Egg- 14 (Duck, Farm), 15 (Local	BG-060 BG-018 SV-801	DEP DEP DEP	1100 1130 1200	DAC-RGN-BKK DAC-ZYL DAC-RUH	BG-042 SV-806 EK-583 BG-097	ARR ARR DEP DEP	1000 1000 1015 1100	RUH-DMM-DAC DAC-DXB DAC-DEL	KU-281 GF-258 KU-282	ARR ARR DEP	0610 0615 0730	KWI-DAC AUH-DAC DAC-KWI	BG-071 SQ-436 BG-031 SQ-435	ARR ARR DEP DEP	2115 2140 2230 2300	SIN-DAC SIN-DAC DAC-KHI DAC-SIN	Alliance Francaise- 8611557 British Council- 8618867-8,
Salad Cucumber- 16	Chicken) Fruits	BG-092 BG-020 TG-321	AAR ARR ARR	1210 1220 1250	CCU-DAC KWI-AUH-ZYL-DAC BKK-DAC	BG-078 SV-809 BG-092	DEP DEP ARR	1130 1200 1210	DAC-HKG DAC-DMM-JED CCU-DAC	GF-259 QR-344	DEP	0730 0730	DAC-AUH DOH-DAC	Sources:		gladesh Airlines e without any pi	8618905-7 Community Development	
Tomato- 16 Lettuce- 2/Piece Carrot- 12	Pineapple- 25-35/piece, Papaya- 25-30/piece	TG-322 BG-108 BG-093	DEP ARR DEP	1400 1400 1710	DAC-BKK ZYL-DAC DAC-CCU	TG-321 BG-701 SV-802	ARR DEP ARR	1250 1345 1400	BKK-DAC DAC-KTM RUH-DAC	BG-083 QR-345 BG-050	ARR DEP ARR	0750 0840 0840	KUL-DAC DAC-DOH DMM-RUH-DAC		DO	YOU KN	OW?	Library- 8113769, 8113604 Goethe Institute Int'l- Dhaka- 9126525-6
Onion Leaf- 30 Capsicum- 180	Futi- 30-40/piece Bel- 15-20/piece Jackfruit- 150-200/piece	BG-021 BG-094 BG-039	DEP ARR DEP	1900 1920 1930	DAC-CGP-MCT CCU-DAC DAC-RUH	TG-322 IC-723 BG-703	DEP ARR DEP	1400 1500 1530	DAC-BKK CCU-DAC DAC-KTM	HY-461 BG-036 EK-336	ARR ARR ARR	0845 0850 0935	TAS-DAC JED-DAC DXB-DAC			s the help		Indian Information Centre & Cultural Library- 8615096
Spices Greeen Chili- 20	Watermelon- 30/50-60/piece Mango (Indian)- 70/kg Grapes- 120/kg	BG-061 EK-337 BG-041	ARR ARR DEP	1930 1940 2000	BKK-RGN-DAC KUL-DAC DAC-BAH-KWI	IC-724 SV-801 BG-098	dep Dep Arr	1550 1600 1645	DAC-CCU DAC-RUH DEL-DAC	BG-091 BG-028	DEP ARR	0950 1000	DAC-CCU AUH-CGP-DAC		Dhaka	just in c	ase you	The Russian Cultural Centre - 9116314, 9118531, 9118314
Onion- 12 Garlic- 36 Ginger- 30	Apple- 80/kg Orange- 80-90/dozen Banana-35/dozen	EK-337 SQ-436 SQ-435	DEP ARR DEP	2050 2140 2300	DAC-DXB SIN-DAC DAC-SIN	BG-702 BG-049 1730	ARR	1700 DEP DAC-DMM-RUH	KTM-DAC	SB-804 HY-462	ARR DEP	1000 1045	JED-RUH-DAC DAC-TAS		need	to reach	police	Drik Photo Gallery- 9120125, 8112954, 8123412