

# Multi-storey parking in Motijheel

Parking problems in the commercial area will be helped with three new parking facilities

SOHEL ISLAM

Finding a parking space at the city's commercial hub of Motijheel can be a serious difficulty on office days.

Although commercialisation has spread very rapidly here, the provision for parking has always been neglected by the concerned authorities.

Most of the high-rise buildings in the area do not have any parking facilities on site. Naturally, vehicles are parked on the street, which invariably results in traffic congestion and jams.

There are allegations that a section of parking-lot attendants, who do not have any legal authority, charge Tk 10 a car claiming that they have got a lease from Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) for the roadside space. Recently, these people have extended their illegal parking operation up to the Malibag crossing.

In the past, the Rajdhani Unnayan Katiripakha (RAJUK), the Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) and other concerned government agencies had discussed ways to end the parking problem of the area but no concrete solution was found.

Now, RAJUK and the DCC have proposed the construction of three multi-storey parking lots at Motijheel.

Last week, the DCC took the decision to erect a multi-storey commercial-cum-parking facility by demolishing the park in front of the Shilpa Bank head office at Motijheel.

The traffic problem of this area is so acute that the authorities do not seem to have any choice but to turn the precious green space into a concrete structure.

Meanwhile, a recent meeting of the RAJUK also gave the go ahead for building two similar high-rise parking spots in front of the Pubali Bank head office and behind the Purbani Hotel. The two facilities will be built on one and half and one bigha\* of land respectively.

"We have already appointed the Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET) as the consultants of the projects. They will go for some feasibility studies soon before designing the parking spaces," said Chief Engineer of RAJUK Syedur Rahman.

RAJUK Chairman Iqbaluddin Chowdhury said they had decided to invite tenders for at least one of the parking lots.

"We are taking this approach because we are not now sure what the public reaction will be to our plan. The important thing is to find out whether the multi-storey parking concept is viable or not," said Chowdhury.

(\* Three bigha = approximately one acre)



Cars parked haphazardly on the street create congestion in Motijheel.

# Death comes at a price

SABRINA KARIM MURSHED

Time can toll the death knell for anyone, anytime. It can come in on your dearest one. You never know.

It's not only grief that engulfs you in the aftermath of any death in your family. There are rituals to perform. So off you go to the funeral parlours -- mostly named "Al Bidai" or "Chiro Bidai Store" -- open 24 hours.

Don't worry. You will be pestered with all sorts of advice on what to buy for a funeral. Shroud, soap, soft towel, rose water, aroma sticks are a must. Coffin, tea leaves, polythene and ice are needed when the bodies are transported long distance. The cost of shrouds depends on their texture, say sellers. The price ranges from Tk 600 to Tk 1,600.

Well, even in times of bereavement, you may have a feeling of being ripped off. How does 13 yards of cloth that sells at Tk 325 on the city market costs you around Tk 600 in the stores?

"It's not only the shroud that we are giving at the same price. We also include rose water and aroma sticks," Monir Hossain of Al Bidai Store protested.

"We need to make some profits and that is for a living," said Amir Hossain of Chiro Bidai Store at Katabon. "We sell a coffin at Tk

450 and it costs us Tk 400 to make," he added. A few expensive coffins are made with much ornamentation for the Christians, he said.

You ask them if it hurts them to run a business related to death. Yes, it does, say most salesmen. "It reminds me of my own death," said Monir Hossain. "But someone has to run such a business to help people out," he added.

Most urban inhabitants feel that burials are getting a bit expensive. "Think of a poor family. They cannot afford it," said Sadia Khan of Mirpur. People also complained that extortionists cash in on the body of a poor person. They go house-to-house in the neighbourhood with the dead body asking for money from the neighbours for burial. But they pocket most of the money.

However, the Anjuman Mufidul Islam, a charity, bears the cost of burials of unclaimed bodies and of the poor upon recommendations from ward commissioners.

Also, there are people like Dr MA Azgar who ease the plight of the poor by arranging everything to bury a poor person free. But Dr Azgar complained about not getting registration for his organisation *Allahr Banda Sheba Shangtha* from the Department of Social Welfare.

# Bus passengers can't get a break

CITY CORRESPONDENT

It's 9am, the morning rush hour. The city's circular buses are pulling over one by one at the Kalyanpur bus-stop. However barring a few, most of the buses were already loaded beyond their capacity with passengers.

For hundreds of anxious commuters, it's a case of waiting for the right bus but that wait can be an arduous experience at this time of the season.

Faced with the wrath of the hovering sun overhead or the prospect of a splash of rain from nowhere, people are virtually helpless to protect themselves from the heat and the showers while waiting at bus stops. Their plight is compounded by the absence of passenger sheds at most stops on the busy stretch between the Technical Intersection and Lalmitia.

"I am waiting for half an hour for a bus. Had there been a shed I would have saved myself from the scorching heat. Now, when I eventually reach office, half my energy will be gone," said Nasrin Akhter, who works for a bank in Motijheel.

After major city roads became off-limit to rickshaws, a good number of new buses hit Dhaka

roads with the promise of improved service. Ticket-counters for passengers' convenience were installed at different strategic locations of the capital too. But no passenger sheds have been erected for the commuters who travel from Mohammedpur and Mirpur to Motijheel via Science Laboratory.

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However, those who commute between Uttara and Motijheel through Farmgate do find sheds at a number of stops, although the size of those leaves a lot to be desired.

A few days ago, one of the bus companies operating from Mohammedpur built a couple of passenger dugouts on the pavement. But those were removed as

they were creating obstacles for the pedestrians.

"As far as I know, the Dhaka Transport Co-ordination Board (DTCP) have decided to erect some permanent sheds for the passengers along some routes of the city," said DC Traffic (North) Ansaruddin Khan Pathan. However he couldn't provide details.

Despite the pledges of the government and transport owners, in reality the ordinary busses are very uncomfortable and the service is appalling.

Tania Haque, who travels from Mirpur to Karwan Bazar every working day, draws attention to a problem that is felt mostly by women.

"It is simply ridiculous that women have to sit on the inferior seats of a public transport, especially the buses. We have to endure the heat of the engine of a bus because most of the seats designated for women are in the front where the engine is located. To my knowledge, provision for seats on top of the engine cover is unlawful. But how do the bus owners continue to get away with such awful sitting arrangements?" asked Nasrin.

DC Traffic (North) Ansaruddin admits to the difficulties faced by the passengers but says that the Bangladesh Road Transport

Authority (BRTA), which issues the licences and fitness certificates of the vehicles, is supposed to supervise this neglected aspect.

"The city's buses are also carrying more passengers than the permissible limit and the BRTA is responsible for checking this trend. Still, the traffic police act on it and sometimes files cases against the lawbreakers. But at times we have to be lenient because during the rush hours, city-dwellers face an acute shortage of public transports," said Ansaruddin.

BRTA officials, for their part, claim that a shortage of manpower prevents them from taking appropriate action.

"With only 291 officers and staff across the country, we cannot function up to the anybody's expectation. We know that many unscrupulous transport owners are taking an undue advantage of our shortcomings. In this regard, we are simply helpless.

"But we have requested the Ministry of Communications to increase the manpower of the BRTA at the earliest. We can only hope that the government will honour our plea," said a top BRTA official on condition of anonymity.

## CITY SITES



STYED ZAKIR HOSSAIN

Kamalapur Railway Station was built in 1967. At the time the modern design was based on a 'half-circle shell-type' structure. It has a total of 11 platforms, serving thousands of passengers every day. The station is a crossroads for the import and export of container goods in and out of Dhaka city. Despite attempts to curb the problem, Kamalapur Station is home to many homeless people, particularly children.

# flight timing, & courier services

## FLIGHT TIMING

Sunday	ARR	DEP	0605	HKG-DAC	0610	KWI-DAC	0615	AUH-DAC	0620	KHI-DAC	0625	DAC-HKG	0630	DAC-KWI	0635	DAC-AUH	0640	DOH-DAC	0645	DAC-DOH	0650	DXB-BOM-DAC	0655	DAC-CCU	0700	JED-RUH-DAC	0705	LHR-DXB-DAC	0710	DAC-KUL	0715	JED-CGP-DAC	0720	DAC-RGN-BKK	0725	DAC-ZYL	0730	SV-801	0735	DAC-RUH	0740	CGU-DAC	0745	WVI-802	0750	CGU-DAC	0755	CGU-DAC	0800	CGU-DAC	0805	CGU-DAC	0810	CGU-DAC	0815	CGU-DAC	0820	CGU-DAC	0825	CGU-DAC	0830	CGU-DAC	0835	CGU-DAC	0840	CGU-DAC	0845	CGU-DAC	0850	CGU-DAC	0855	CGU-DAC	0900	CGU-DAC	0905	CGU-DAC	0910	CGU-DAC	0915	CGU-DAC	0920	CGU-DAC	0925	CGU-DAC	0930	CGU-DAC	0935	CGU-DAC	0940	CGU-DAC	0945	CGU-DAC	0950	CGU-DAC	0955	CGU-DAC	1000	CGU-DAC	1005	CGU-DAC	1010	CGU-DAC	1015	CGU-DAC	1020	CGU-DAC	1025	CGU-DAC	1030	CGU-DAC	1035	CGU-DAC	1040	CGU-DAC	1045	CGU-DAC	1050	CGU-DAC	1055	CGU-DAC	1100	CGU-DAC	1105	CGU-DAC	1110	CGU-DAC	1115	CGU-DAC	1120	CGU-DAC	1125	CGU-DAC	1130	CGU-DAC	1135	CGU-DAC	1140	CGU-DAC	1145	CGU-DAC	1150	CGU-DAC	1155	CGU-DAC	1200	CGU-DAC	1205	CGU-DAC	1210	CGU-DAC	1215	CGU-DAC	1220	CGU-DAC	1225	CGU-DAC	1230	CGU-DAC	1235	CGU-DAC	1240	CGU-DAC	1245	CGU-DAC	1250	CGU-DAC	1255	CGU-DAC	1300	CGU-DAC	1305	CGU-DAC	1310	CGU-DAC	1315	CGU-DAC	1320	CGU-DAC	1325	CGU-DAC	1330	CGU-DAC	1335	CGU-DAC	1340	CGU-DAC	1345	CGU-DAC	1350	CGU-DAC	1355	CGU-DAC	1400	CGU-DAC	1405	CGU-DAC	1410	CGU-DAC	1415	CGU-DAC	1420	CGU-DAC	1425	CGU-DAC	1430	CGU-DAC	1435	CGU-DAC	1440	CGU-DAC	1445	CGU-DAC	1450	CGU-DAC	1455	CGU-DAC	1500	CGU-DAC	1505	CGU-DAC	1510	CGU-DAC	1515	CGU-DAC	1520	CGU-DAC	1525	CGU-DAC	1530	CGU-DAC	1535	CGU-DAC	1540	CGU-DAC	1545	CGU-DAC	1550	CGU-DAC	1555	CGU-DAC	1600	CGU-DAC	1605	CGU-DAC	1610	CGU-DAC	1615	CGU-DAC	1620	CGU-DAC	1625	CGU-DAC	1630	CGU-DAC	1635	CGU-DAC	1640	CGU-DAC	1645	CGU-DAC	1650	CGU-DAC	1655	CGU-DAC	1700	CGU-DAC	1705	CGU-DAC	1710	CGU-DAC	1715	CGU-DAC	1720	CGU-DAC	1725	CGU-DAC	1730	CGU-DAC	1735	CGU-DAC	1740	CGU-DAC	1745	CGU-DAC	1750	CGU-DAC	1755	CGU-DAC	1800	CGU-DAC	1805	CGU-DAC	1810	CGU-DAC	1815	CGU-DAC	1820	CGU-DAC	1825	CGU-DAC	1830	CGU-DAC	1835	CGU-DAC	1840	CGU-DAC	1845	CGU-DAC	1850	CGU-DAC	1855	CGU-DAC	1900	CGU-DAC	1905	CGU-DAC	1910	CGU-DAC	1915	CGU-DAC	1920	CGU-DAC	1925	CGU-DAC	1930	CGU-DAC	1935	CGU-DAC	1940	CGU-DAC	1945	CGU-DAC	1950	CGU-DAC	1955	CGU-DAC	2000	CGU-DAC	2005	CGU-DAC	2010	CGU-DAC	2015	CGU-DAC	2020	CGU-DAC	2025	CGU-DAC	2030	CGU-DAC	2035	CGU-DAC	2040	CGU-DAC	2045	CGU-DAC	2050	CGU-DAC	2055	CGU-DAC	2100	CGU-DAC	2105	CGU-DAC	2110	CGU-DAC	2115	CGU-DAC	2120	CGU-DAC	2125	CGU-DAC	2130	CGU-DAC	2135	CGU-DAC	2140	CGU-DAC	2145	CGU-DAC	2150	CGU-DAC	2155	CGU-DAC	2200	CGU-DAC	2205	CGU-DAC	2210	CGU-DAC	2215	CGU-DAC	2220	CGU-DAC	2225	CGU-DAC	2230	CGU-DAC	2235	CGU-DAC	2240	CGU-DAC	2245	CGU-DAC	2250	CGU-DAC	2255	CGU-DAC	2300	CGU-DAC	2305	CGU-DAC	2310	CGU-DAC	2315	CGU-DAC	2320	CGU-DAC	2325	CGU-DAC	2330	CGU-DAC	2335	CGU-DAC	2340	CGU-DAC	2345	CGU-DAC	2350	CGU-DAC	2355	CGU-DAC	2400	CGU-DAC
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Monday	DEP	0145	BG-013	DEP	0610	DAC-DXB-LHR	BG-035	DEP	1815	DAC-JED	EK-336	1050	DAC-KUL	0615	ARR	0610	CGU-DAC	0620	ARR	0615	CGU-DAC	0625	ARR	0620	CGU-DAC	0630	ARR	0625	CGU-DAC	0635	ARR	0630	CGU-DAC	0640	ARR	0635	CGU-DAC	0645	ARR	0640	CGU-DAC	0650	ARR	0645	CGU-DAC	0655	ARR	0650	CGU-DAC	0700	ARR	0655	CGU-DAC	0705	ARR	0700	CGU-DAC	0710	ARR	0705	CGU-DAC	0715	ARR	0710	CGU-DAC	0720	ARR	0715	CGU-DAC	0725	ARR	0720	CGU-DAC	0730	ARR	0725	CGU-DAC	0735	ARR	0730	CGU-DAC	0740	ARR	0735	CGU-DAC	0745	ARR	0740	CGU-DAC	0750	ARR	0745	CGU-DAC	0755	ARR	0750	CGU-DAC	0800	ARR	0755	CGU-DAC	0805	ARR	0800	CGU-DAC	0810	ARR	0805	CGU-DAC	0815	ARR	0810	CGU-DAC	0820	ARR	0815	CGU-DAC	0825	ARR	0820	CGU-DAC	0830	ARR	0825	CGU-DAC	0835	ARR	0830	CGU-DAC	0840	ARR	0835	CGU-DAC	0845	ARR	0840	CGU-DAC	0850	ARR	0845	CGU-DAC	0855	ARR	0850	CGU-DAC	0900	ARR	0855	CGU-DAC	0905	ARR	0900	CGU-DAC	0910	ARR	0905	CGU-DAC	0915	ARR	0910	CGU-DAC	0920	ARR	0915	CGU-DAC	0925	ARR	0920	CGU-DAC	0930	ARR	0925	CGU-DAC	0935	ARR	0930	CGU-DAC	0940	ARR	0935	CGU-DAC	0945	ARR	0940	CGU-DAC	0950	ARR	0945	CGU-DAC	0955	ARR	0950	CGU-DAC	1000	ARR	0955	CGU-DAC	1005	ARR	1000	CGU-DAC	1010	ARR	1005	CGU-DAC	1015	ARR	1010	CGU-DAC	1020	ARR	1015	CGU-DAC	1025	ARR	1020	CGU-DAC	1030	ARR	1025	CGU-DAC	1035	ARR	1030	CGU-DAC	1040	ARR	1035	CGU-DAC	1045	ARR	1040	CGU-DAC	1050	ARR	1045	CGU-DAC	1055	ARR	1050	CGU-DAC	1100	ARR	1055	CGU-DAC	1105	ARR	1100	CGU-DAC	1110	ARR	1105	CGU-DAC	1115	ARR	1110	CGU-DAC	1120	ARR	1115	CGU-DAC	1125	ARR	1120	CGU-DAC	1130	ARR	1125	CGU-DAC	1135	ARR	1130	CGU-DAC	1140	ARR	1135	CGU-DAC	1145	ARR	1140	CGU-DAC	1150	ARR	1145	CGU-DAC	1155	ARR	1150	CGU-DAC	1200	ARR	1155	CGU-DAC	1205	ARR	1200	CGU-DAC	1210	ARR	1205	CGU-DAC	1215	ARR	1210	CGU-DAC	1220	ARR	1215	CGU-DAC	1225	ARR	1220	CGU-DAC	1230	ARR	1225	CGU-DAC	1235	ARR	1230	CGU-DAC	1240	ARR	1235	CGU-DAC	1245	ARR	1240	CGU-DAC	1250	ARR	1245	CGU-DAC	1255	ARR	1250	CGU-DAC	1300	ARR	1255	CGU-DAC	1305	ARR	1300	CGU-DAC	1310	ARR	1305	CGU-DAC	1315	ARR	1310	CGU-DAC	1320	ARR	1315	CGU-DAC	1325	ARR	1320	CGU-DAC	1330	ARR	1325	CGU-DAC	1335	ARR	1330	CGU-DAC	1340	ARR	1335	CGU-DAC	1345	ARR	1340	CGU-DAC	1350	ARR	1345	CGU-DAC	1355	ARR	1350	CGU-DAC	1400	ARR	1355
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