

Gangsters grabbing city's major markets



Bakusha Market, though not DCC owned, is just one of the city's major prominent markets illegally occupied and run by the unauthorised Bakusha Hawker's Market Samabay Samity.

SULTANA RAHMAN

The Dhaka City Corporation is losing more than a dozen markets to grabbers and gangsters and missing out on about Tk 7 lakh in revenues a month.

Corruption and lack of coordination in engineering, market circle and estate departments of the DCC are blamed for the situation.

To make things worse, about 50 injunctions, some of them imposed between 1984 and 1989 over the markets, put the DCC in a dilemma. Injunctions by the High Court came after different organisations filed cases against one another, staking a claim to the ownership of shops.

The major markets that are slipping into the hands of grabbers are block-D of Dhaka New Market, first floor of Mohammadpur Kitchen Market, second floor of Karwan Bazar Kitchen Market, Fulbaria City Super Market, part of Shah Ali Market in Mirpur and parts of Mohammadpur Krishi Panya Market, among others.

It is alleged that most markets have been occupied illegally in the name of some organisations, backed by politically influential people, including local commissioners. Sources alleged that some dishonest officials of the DCC are abetting the illegal occupiers. "Forming an organisation is the first step to occupy the market," said a senior official at the DCC. "More and more organisations based on the markets are mushrooming," he added.

In the New Market alone grew dozens of organisations, including New Market Banik Samity and New Market Hawkers' Kalyan Bahumukhi Samabay Samity.

Only five organisations of them are registered with Trade Union: New Market Baboshai Samiti, New Super Market (south) Banik Samiti, Chandrima Super Market

Baboshai Samiti, New Super Market (north) Banik Samiti and New Market Kancha Bazaar Baboshai Samiti.

The occupiers have grabbed 450 shops at the New Market since 1984.

Mockbul Hossain Sarder, joint secretary of Dhaka New Market (main) Baboshai Samiti, alleged that the DCC never moved against the so-called organisations and it is losing control of the markets.

"This is happening because of lack of coordination among the three departments and their involvement with the grabbers," said a DCC official. The occupiers became even more active as the DCC that has 105 markets, including 36 supermarkets, could not ensure security to the marketplaces, he added.

The DCC security patrol under the estate department is responsible for maintaining security of the markets, the market circle department distributes shops and collects revenues and the engineering department is in charge of construction.

"The estate department has tried to evict illegal occupiers several times, but the occupiers took back the possession of the markets overnight," said a senior official of the DCC.

The DCC formed a 'market distribution committee' led by its chief executive officer in June this year, with commissioners, top officials of engineering, revenue, estate and law departments as members. The deputy chief revenue officer (market) is member secretary of the committee.

Mayor Sadeque Hossain Khoka nominated all the members for construction, distribution and management of the markets.

In a recent interview with Star City, the mayor said the DCC would be active in collecting revenues and distributing the shops properly. About the court injunctions, he said the DCC has nothing to do with those and opportunists are cashing in on the situation.

Rupnagar residents robbed by officials

AKBAR HOSSAIN

A deceitful group of people is grabbing lucrative plots of land at Rupnagar Residential Area (RRA) at Pallabi, in Mirpur, violating the project profile approved by the Executive Committee on the National Economic Council (ECNEC).

Rupnagar residents are being deprived of civil amenities, as the plots earmarked for the area's school, college, park, hospital, lake and shopping complex are losing out to an unauthorised 'samabay samity.'

The land-grabbing bid started in 1997-1998, under protection from former lawmaker Kamal Ahmed Majumder, with the connivance of several National Housing Authority (NHA) officials.

To ease the housing problem the NHA took up the Rupnagar project in 1984 on 10,181 acres, which were divided into 1,200 plots of different sizes. Of these plots 31 were kept as commercial in the project profile in order to meet the project expenditure without government funds.

The locals alleged the NHA officials were bribed into doctoring the original plan and handed

several commercial plots to the unauthorised association, tagging them as 'institutional plots' in a different document.

"A commercial plot is sold at a much higher rate than a residential one. But Kamal Majumder gave his loyalists the commercial plots at a low price. Those people started illegal construction on the plots," said SM Rafiqul Islam, office secretary of Rupnagar Residential Welfare Association, an organisation of local plot owners.

But an ECNEC decision prohibits the handover of any plot of the project to any organisation.

Worse, Rupnagar Government Housing Estate Cooperative Society, Muktijoddha Rehabilitation Cooperative Society and Sonar Bangla Bohumukhi Samabay Samity are filling the lake in the residential area, for which they have permission from the authorities.

But the lake-filling move goes against the project profile. The lake was kept in the main project profile for proper draining of rainwater and to enhance the beauty of the area.

Meantime, Rupnagar Residential Welfare Association wrote to Prime Minister Khaleda

Zia on September 15, 2000, pointing out the violation of original project profile.

The letter was sent to the housing and public works ministry from the Prime Minister's Office. On receipt of the letter, the ministry told the NHA chairman on December 12, 2002 to investigate the alleged irregularities and report back to the ministry in 10 days.

The NHA chairman asked the executive engineer of Mirpur circle on January 7, 2003 to probe the allegations and submit a report in seven days. But no action has yet been taken.

Kamal Majumder, contacted by phone, denied the allegation and said, "If any allegation against me of plot irregularities is proved, I will leave Mirpur area." The former lawmaker also said, "As an MP I cannot do anything but request." But he ducked a question whether he made any request in favour of anybody loyal to him.

Officials of the Samabay Samity could not be contacted for comments. Mohammed Abdul Khaleq, NHA chairman, could not be reached either despite repeated attempts.

Investment policy for Dhaka

SOHEL ISLAM

A high-powered committee has been formed on the directive of the Prime Minister to prepare an investment policy in the private sector for infrastructural development of Dhaka city and the rest of the country, according to sources.

In a meeting, held at the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) on July 19 with the Prime Minister herself in the chair, responsibility in this regard was given to a seven-member committee headed by Principal Secretary to the PM Dr Kamal Uddin Siddiqui.

The committee will enact a draft after analysing similar policies and laws of countries like Malaysia, Thailand, the Philippines, Taiwan etc.

The meeting also emphasised that the committee should ensure the interest of the country when opting for the developmental works under Build-Operate-Own (BOT) and Build-Operate-Own (BOO) methods.

A month's time has been given for submission of the draft to the Prime Minister.

Other issues were also discussed at the meeting. It was decided that the eastern part of Bijoy Sarani would be extended by acquiring structures on both sides of the Rangs Bhaban and to connect it with the Tongi Diversion Road.

The Kamapur Container Depot

will be shifted to Tongi to ease the pressure created by an ever-increasing number of containers and its handling.

The Chittagong Port Authority and Bangladesh Railway will be responsible for implementation of the relocation process.

Sources at the meeting also informed that the Shadharan Bima Corporation would finally construct the much-awaited 20 storey commercial-cum-car parking facility at Motijheel with its own funds on about two-bigha land.

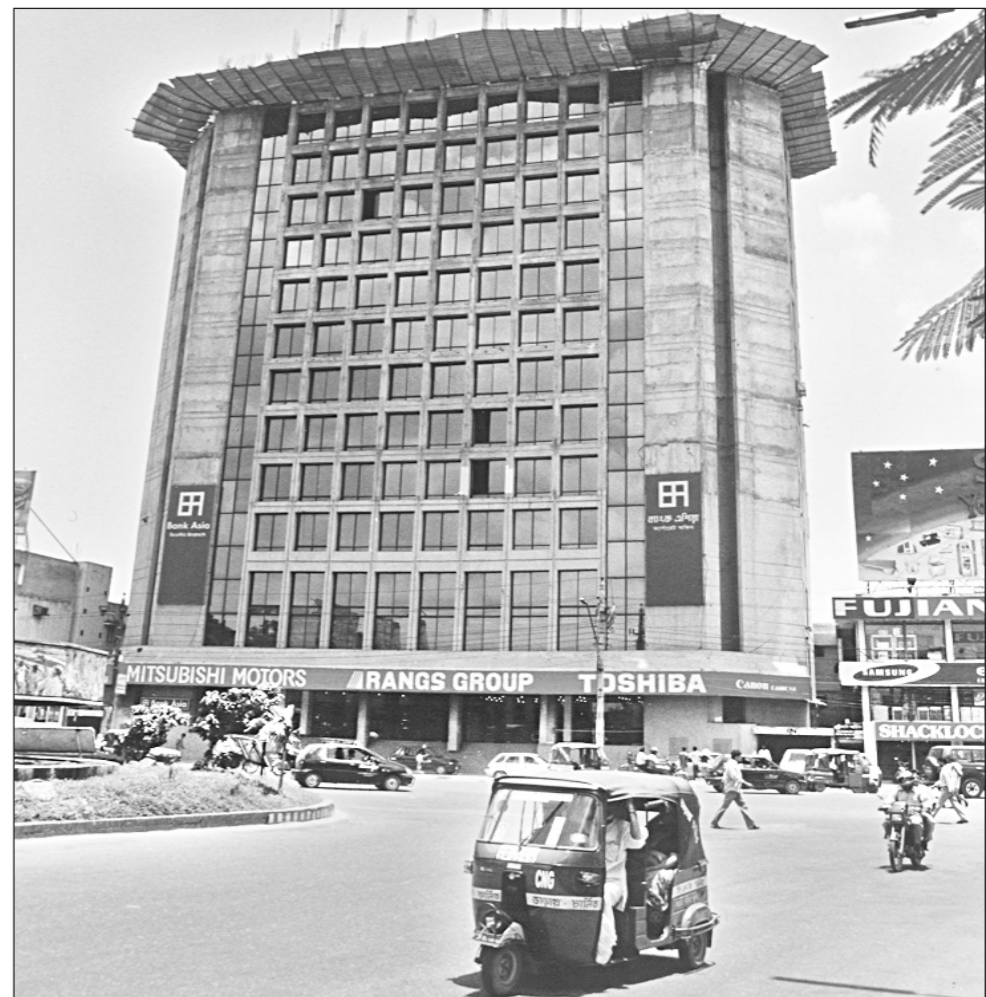
The estimated cost of this multi-storey parking has been fixed at about Tk 100 Crore. Shadharan Bima Corporation has already invited tenders in this regard.

In order to reduce traffic congestion of the city, the Tejaon Truck Terminal will be re-located to a suitable place on the outskirts of the city.

Bangladesh Railway, Dhaka City Corporation, Dhaka Metropolitan Police and Dhaka Transport Co-ordination Board will work together to complete this venture.

Another major decision was to transfer the Dhaka Central Jail to Gazipur and Keraniganj to allow the city some breathing space.

"Like the prison at the Andaman Islands, some historic parts of the Dhaka Central Jail will be turned into museums. The rest of the place will be used as open spaces and parks," said one of the participants of the meeting.



Bijoy Sarani will be extended by acquiring structures on both sides of Rangs Bhaban in order to connect it with the Tongi Diversion Road as part of Dhaka's infrastructural development.

Courier, Marketprice & Outing

COURIER SERVICES

- International**
Air Borne Express- 9561371, 9561372, 9550724
Air Couriers Int'l (BD) Ltd.- 8815970
Aramex International Courier- 9558003, 9559582, 9565075
Airspeed Express- 9563494
Asian Courier Services Ltd.- 8313543
Baishakhi Courier Service- 9558606
Bangladesh Express Co. Ltd.- 9565114
Bangladesh Courier Service- 9563989
Bengal Express- 9560642, 9552666
Bangladesh Int'l Courier- 953636
Continental Service Ltd.- 9552948, 9558425
DHL Worldwide Express- 9881703-7, 9886305-9, 9882057
Enem Express- 9330699
Fedex Bangladesh Express Co. Ltd.- 9565114
Modhuban Courier Service- 9550884
Overseas Courier Service- 9352431, 8321169
Pacific Courier- 9568446
Reliance Express Service- 9558515, 7110249
Sky International Service- 9660442
Skynet world Wide Express- 9558062, 9560258, 7114787, 7113184
TNT Express- 9566662, 9558239, 8618155
Union Courier Service- 9341722
United Parcel Service Air alliance Ltd.- 8826429, 8810223
- National**
Asian courier Service Ltd- 8313543
BAE- 9884851
Central Courier Service- 9881118
Confidence Courier Service Ltd. 9567036
Chisty Courier- 7110177-9, 7100842-4
Cosmopol Services- 9552793, 9557975

- Dhaka Courier Services- 7236222
Dolphin Courier- 9558802
Dreamland Courier Service- 9550326, 9566975
Pioneer Courier Services- 9561727, 9569759
Probashi Courier Services- 9346359
Rainbow Express Parcel Services Ltd.- 8322773, 8315703
Reliance Express Services- 9558515, 7110249
Sundarban Courier Services- 9551984, 9556189, 9551656
Sunrise Courier Services- 9568751

TIPS
Do not forget to bring your rain-coat. and To avoid traffic

MARKET CLOSED

- Gulshan 1, 2 markets-Friday
Elephant Road-Friday
Bishal Center-Friday
Baitul Mukarram Market-Friday
Polwell Market-Friday
BCS Computer City-Friday
Isha Khan Shopping Complex-Friday.
Rajlaxmi Complex-Friday
Stadium Market-Friday
Bangabazar Market-Friday
National Museum-Thursdays
Ahsan Manzil-Thursdays.
New Market-Tuesday
Gausia Market-Tuesday
Mouchak Market-Sunday
Dhanmondi Hawkers Market-Tuesday
Dhanmondi Hawkers Market-Tuesday
Eastern Plaza-Sunday
Farmview Super Market-Sunday
Muktijuddha Jadughar-Sunday
Dhaka Zoo-Sunday
Shishu Jadughar-Sunday

MARKET PRICE

- Rice (Tk. Per Kg)**
Miniket- 20-22
Pajam- 18.50-19.50
Najirshail- 21-22
Kalijira- 33-34 (Polao)
Chinigura- 35-36 (Polao)
Dal (Tk. Per Kg)
Masur Dal- 42-44
Masur Imported- 38-40
Mug Dal- 42-44
Mug Imported- 38-40
Motor Dal- 36-38
Motor Imported- 20-21
Oil (Tk. Per Litre)
Mustard- 65-70
Soyabean- 41-42
Palm- 35-36
Coconut (Imported)- 100-160
Veg. Ghee- 42-44
Ghee- 300-320
Spices (Tk. Per Kg.)
Onion (local)- 20-22
Onion (Imported)- 16-18
Garlic- 30-32
Garlic (Imported)- 24-28
Ginger- 26-28
Ginger (Imported)- 26-28
Turmeric- 65-68
Turmeric (Imported)- 60-62
Dried (Red) Chili- 70-80
Green Chili- 20-24
Coriander (Dhania)- 30-32

- Kalijira- 8-10
Cumin (Jira)- 14-16
Cinnamon- 14-16
Almond- 60-70
Aniseed (Labanga)- 40-50
Black Pepper- 20-24
Vegetables (Tk Per Kg)
Potato- 13-14
Eggplant- 12-14
Green Papya- 6-8
Pumpkin (Misti Kumra)- 7-8
Patal- 10-12
Karalla- 14-16
Borboti, (Beans)- 14-16
Dherosh, (Okra)- 12-14
Kakrol- 10-12
Kachumukhi- 10-12
Kachurlati- 10-12
Cucumber- 10-12
Chichinga- 10-12
Jhinga- 12-14
Lal shak- 10-12
Pui Shak- 8-10
Green Banana- 6-8 (Per Hali)
Jali Lau- 10-12/Piece
PaniKachu- 8-10
Fish (Tk. Per Kg)
Rui (Local, Medium Size)- 230-240
Rui (Local, Small Size)- 130-140
Katal (Local, Medium Size)- 140-150
Katal (Local, Small Size)- 110-120
Katal (Imported, Medium)- 80-90
- Hilsha (Big)- 160-170
Hilsha (Small)- 100-110
Pangash (Big)- 140-150
Pangash (Small)- 60-65
Shing- 300-320
Prawn (Big)- 180-200
Prawn (Small)- 110-120
Silvercarp- 50-60
Meat & Egg (Per Kg)
Beef- 85-90
Mutton- 140-150
Chicken- 75 (Poultry)
Egg- 15-16 (Duck, Farm), 15-16 (Local Chicken)
Fruits (Tk. Per Kg)
Green Coconut- 8-10 (Per Piece)
Pineapple- 12-15 (Per Piece)
Coconut- 10-14 (Per Piece)
Jack-fruit- 50-70 (Per Piece)
Guava- 12-16 (Per Hali)
Banana- 6-8 (Per Hali)
Lemon- 4-5 (Per Hali)
Mango- 40-55 (Differs species)
Apple- 80-90
Others (Tk. Per Kg)
Sugar- 32-34
Brown Sugar- 26-28
Salt- 10-11 (Packet)
Tea- 120-130
Gold- 8500 (11.66 grams)
Silver- 250 (11.66 grams)

OUTING

- Museum and Zoo**
National Museum- 8619396-9
Open: 10 am 5 pm, Friday 3 pm - 8 pm, Thursday closed
Muktijuddha Jadughar- 9559091
Open: 10:30 am 6:30 pm, Sunday Closed
Bangabandhu Smiti Jadughar- 8110046
Open: 10 am 5 pm, Wednesday closed
Ahsan Manzil
Open: 10 am 5 pm, Friday: 3 pm - 7 pm, Thursday Closed
Shishu Jadughar- 9666466
Open: 10 am- 6 pm, Sunday Closed
Sonargoan Jadugha

Sources: Agricultural Marketing Department