

# Dhanmondi Lake a hotbed for muggers in the dark

## Precious power goes down the drain

### DCC and contractor blame each other for lack of lights

**AVIK SANWAR RAHMAN**  
As soon as evening falls, the entire Dhanmondi Lake area turns into a hotbed of mugging and petty crimes because of lack of electricity.

People from across the city come to the lake to have a free gossip or a walk or to sit beside the lake for an escape to nature. Many stay back even after the sunset and become victims of the muggers who prowl the area under the cover of darkness.

The power division of Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) is responsible for the power supply to the walkway lights of the Dhanmondi Lake. But a DCC official claimed that the construction firm for the Dhanmondi Lake, Monami International has not yet handed over its charge to the DCC.

"The construction firm has not completed cabling and fitting bulbs of all walkway lights. We'll take over and supply power as soon as the firm completes its work," said a sub-divisional DCC

engineer.

Abul Hossain Kabir, the managing director of Monami International tasked with the construction, denied the allegation.

"We've completed the work of all the walkway lights and submitted a letter asking the DCC to take charge of the lake, but the DCC is not taking any action," said Kabir.

Kabir also said his company has provided bulbs for the walkway lights but all were stolen. "This is the second time that we have provided the bulbs. The bulbs were stolen as the DCC is not ensuring security in the area," said Kabir.

But a DCC official said, "We don't know anything about the bulbs provided by Monami International."

Monami International claims that the DCC did not fully pay the company for the construction of the Dhanmondi Lake, although it has completed the work.

People now speculate how many days they have to suffer from bureaucratic tangles.



All is set for installing lights along the walkways of Dhanmondi lake. But when will they be lit?

**SABRINA KARIM MURSHED**

Lack of awareness leads to waste to put it in clichéd words and indifference among people, especially decorator owners, is often blamed for improper use of electricity.

Electricity is being wasted though power crisis turned out to be an inseparable part of city life. People hardly receive uninterrupted power supply because of increasing demand, less production and technical glitch. If prevented, the wasted electricity could ease the plight to a little extent.

Dhaka's community centres hired for social occasions waste electricity throughout the year and keep small electric bulbs on as part of decoration even if there is no occasion.

No community centre can be found without tiny twinkling colourful bulbs adorning the building. They are required for creating a gala mood for any social occasion like wedding ceremony or birthday party. But the centre uses them even when the place is not rented.

Community centre owners

said they do not switch off lights only to draw people's attention. "They come to know the community centre exists there and also can see how it looks when decorated," said Mubarak Ali of Probal Community Centre at Rokeya Sarani. Some community centre owners refuted the allegation of power waste saying they pay electricity bills for it, not customers.

Sources said a little power pilferage takes place in the community centres as some of them connect the small bulbs to main electric poles in the area rather than their private electric connections. So, the meters do not run and the consumers are not charged electricity bills.

An electricity bill for a thousand small decorating bulbs is Tk 200 to Tk 300 a day, said Asgar Sheikh of Bikrampur Decorator. "Not only community centres but those who hire decorating bulbs for adorning house on social occasions also connect those with main electric poles," he added. He said the decorator people fix the illegal connection, as their customer wants it to be.

# Paperboys early morning moonlight

**CITY CORRESPONDENT**

For them, day begins at 5 A.M.; when they ride to the nearest newspaper distribution center on their bicycles. The city has at least forty such newspaper distribution centers, each having its own number of newspaper hawkers. As such, Dhaka itself approximately has over 5,000 paperboys. They work almost all the thirty days of the month, except for the public holidays observed by the newspapers; these hawkers are quite content with their daily job and life.

Most hawkers in their early twenties have other jobs besides these, where they try to earn some

extra money. It is the daily duration of the job of the paperboys that makes it a lot more. The monthly salary of a hawker ranges from Tk 500 and goes up to a maximum of Tk. 1800. Therefore, they have to do other jobs in order to support their families.

"I usually get done with this job by 7:30 AM and then make my way to my next job which starts from 8 AM," said Abul Kashem, a 22 year old paperboy, who is also a garments worker and has to support a family of five members. "I have been working as a hawker for over nine years now and I prefer this job more because of all the friends and the people I got to know while

working in this sector," said Kashem.

"I have to do this job and also work in a shop, later," said Selim, an 18 year old newspaper hawker. "My sister and I have been the only supports for our family of six members for the past nine years." Said Selim. Selim resides at Tajmahal road and has been working in a shop in the area for over seven years now. With the rising prices Selim has been going through a rough patch for the last three years supporting his family.

"It would be more helpful if the concerned authorities raised our monthly salaries which have not changed for over sometime now," said Shahidullah, a newspaper distributor of the Asad gate newspaper distribution center. "If such conditions persist these hawkers may just revert to other jobs in the near future," said Shahid.

Most of these hawkers are actually paid staff members of some 'influential' hawkers association of the city and as claimed by the New Hawker's Association of Dhaka, are the actual workers, who receive the commission based on the units of newspapers sold. This commission rate has been existing since 1978 and has not changed ever since, resulting in the low salaries of these hawkers.

# Funding cut back for transport planners

**CITY CORRESPONDENT**

The ministry of Planning and Finance has suggested reducing the manpower of the DTCB (Dhaka Transport Coordination Board).

That has threatened the existence of the DTCB as the ECNEC (Executive Committee of National Economic Council) last week did not approve the modified project in its last meeting.

The Pre- ECNEC meeting held in January reviewed the DTCB project and suggested reducing its manpower to 80 from 113. The committee wanted withdrawal of 35 staffs including 15 technical officials.

According to DUTP officials, reducing the number of steno and computer operators will not pose a major problem, but cutting down on technical persons might prove hazardous for the project.

The DUTP, funded principally by the World Bank, came into being in

1999 and is scheduled to end in July 2004.

"If the ECNEC approve the existing project, then the planning for the second phase of DTCB could start," said a source. "Now the project is left on an interim arrangement. After the

ECNEC's approval, the DTCB would get formal identity," he added.

The DTCB sent the revision Project Proposal (PP) in July to the Planning Commission. But rules suggest that modified proposals usually do not get approved in the final meetings of the ECNEC and only the pre-ECNEC proposals get formally approved.

Under the circumstances, the fate of the DTCB after the completion of DUTP (Dhaka Urban Transport Project) next year, is shrouded in uncertainty as the authorities have hardly made any plans regarding its function. Also, the project has not received any funds from the revenue budget.



Will slashing manpower at DTCB improve traffic problems?



## useful telephonenumber numbers

### OURIER 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  
Banmgladesh 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 you know according to Dhaka City Corporation, you must deposit your waste at the collection site between 4pm and 10pm

### LIBRARY & INFO-

#### Libraries, Cultural and Information Centers

**Central Public Library-** 8626001-4,  
**Shishu Academy-** 9564128  
**Shilpakala Academy-** 8614673  
**Bangla Academy-** 8619550  
**Islamic Foundation-** 9550280, 9556407  
**Nazrul Institute-** 9114602  
**Ford Foundation-** 8116133  
**Alliance Francaise-** 8611557  
**British Council-** 8618867-8, 8618905-7  
**Community Development Library-** 8113769, 8113604  
**Goethe Institute Int'l- Dhaka-** 9126525-6  
**Indian Information Centre & Cultural Library-** 8615096  
**The Russian Cultural Centre-** 9116314, 9118531, 9118314  
**Drik Photo Gallery-** 9120125, 8112954, 8123412

### 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 Jadughar**

### CITY BUS ROUTE

Bus No.	Route	Starts from
1	Gulistan-Shahbagh-Banglamotor-Farmgate-Mirpur 10, 11, 12	Golap Shah Mazar
2	Gulistan-Shahbagh-Banglamotor-Farmgate-Mirpur 1, 2	Phoolbaria bus station
3	Gulistan-Shahbagh-Farmgate-Mahakhali-Airport-Azampur	Phoolbaria bus station
4	Shyampur-Motijheel-Shahbagh-Farmgate-Airport-Tongi	Shyampur
5	Sayedabad-Kamalapur-Motijheel-Airport-Joydebpur-Gazipur	Sayedabad
6 A	Kamalapur-Motijheel-Gulistan-Shahbagh-Farmgate-Gulistan 1, 2	Kamalapur
6 B	Kamalapur-Motijheel-Gulistan-Maghbazar-Nabisco-Gulshan 1, 2	Kamalapur
6 C	Motijheel Shapla chattr- Malibagh- Farmgate- Gulshan 2	Motijheel Shaplachattr
7	Sadarghat-Gulistan-Maghbazar-Nabisco-Gulshan 2	Sadarghat
8	Chittagong-Motijheel-Shahbagh-Farmgate-Asad Gate-Kalyanpur-Gabtoil	Chittagong Road
9	Demra Rani mahal-Motijheel-Kalbagan-Shyamoli-Mirpur 1, 10, 11, 12	Demra Ranimahar
10	Sadarghat-Gulistan-Kakrail-Malibagh-Rampura-Biwa Road-Tongi Bridge	Sadarghat
11	Sayedabad-Motijheel-Fakirapool-Maghbazar-Mohakhali-Tongi Bridge	Sayedabad
11/A	Sayedabad-Khilgoan-Malibagh-Rampura-Airport-Tongi Bridge	Syedabad
12	Shanir Akhra-Shahbagh-Farmgate-Asadgate-Mohammadpur	Shanir Akhra
13	Motijheel-Shahbagh-New Market-Jhigatola-Shangkar-Mohammedpur	Motijheel
14	Signboard -Motijheel-Shahbagh-New Market-Shyamoli-Mirpur 1, 12	Signboard (Chittagong Road)
15	Chittagong Road-Motijheel-Shahbagh-Farmgate-Mirpur 12	Chittagong Road
24	Gulistan-Maghbazar-Mohakhali-Airport-Uttara-Bipile	Gulistan