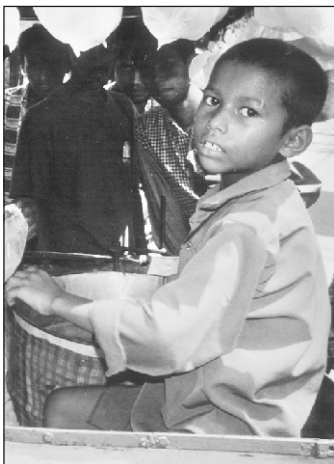


Many children in the city are working in highly hazardous environments such as this battery recycling factory.

A working policy on child labour

Four NGOs are working successfully to implement the International Labour Organization's project on the elimination of high risk child labour



CITY CORRESPONDENT

Al-Amin came to Dhaka with his family six years ago when their village home was swallowed up by the river.

That piece of land lost to erosion was their only possession and almost overnight the family became insolvent. The fight with poverty meant that Al-Amin, who was ten years old then, had to give up his academic aspirations and start working 14 hours a day at a lathe workshop.

But now Al-Amin is studying once again thanks to the Multi Purpose Center (MPC).

The MPC has brought about a revolution for child laborers like Al-Amin by decreasing their working hours while providing technical and academic education in the time saved.

The Dhaka based center is jointly guided

by the Ahsania Mission, Unprivileged Children Education Program (UCEP), Resource Integration Center (RIC) and Thangamara Mohila Sobuj Shongha.

These four non-government organisations are working together to implement the International Labor Organization (ILO) project titled 'elimination of high risk child labor.'

Besides academic and technical education for the children, the ILO also provides loan for their parents, which can be paid back in installments.

"This process makes it easier for my son to learn and work at the same time. We can also earn money by doing business with the ILO loan," said Farida Begum, a parent.

Among some estimated 63,00000 child laborers in Dhaka City, the project has targetted 20,000.

About 7314 of them have been given

education through 100 MPCs situated at 89 wards of Dhaka. 3612 children are now studying in various schools after getting a year's training and education under the ILO. Of them 970 have got themselves admitted at UCEP's technical training center.

"We organised the program in Dhaka first as an experiment. We have passed only one year since it began. I believe we can prevent child labor in our country if we work together like we are working on this project," said Sharfuddin Khan, co-ordinator of advocacy and awareness program of ILO in Bangladesh.

The ILO took the programme on July 2002 following the passage of the convention 182 of prevention of child rights at the International Labor Conference in June 1999.

Jatrabari-Gulistan flyover fails to take off

SOHEL ISLAM

The opening of Jatrabari-Gulistan flyover may be delayed as the Road and Highways Department (RHD) and the Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) are at loggerheads over how to handle the one kilometre road and its adjacent lands near the Dhaka-Chittagong Highway.

"Despite repeated requests, the RHD did not to hand over the roads and land to us. It is beyond my understanding why they are behaving like this. This discriminatory attitude may hamper the entire project," said a source at the DCC requesting anonymity.

On August 30, DCC Chief Engineer Dr Golam Quadeer again sent a

request to the RHD Chief Engineer for immediate handing over of the road and land. He also expressed his frustration over two earlier decisions, which were taken at the Prime Minister's Office on July 7 and 11 are yet to be implemented.

On August 31, the DCC accepted the second phase proposals from three foreign companies for the construction of the flyover. On the same day, the DCC stated that they hoped they would be able to start the construction of the flyover by the first week of October this year.

"We are working earnestly to start the construction by October, but the possession of land and road at Dhaka-Chittagong highway may hinder the start of the flyover," said

the source.

Approached over telephone, the RHD chief engineer could not reached for his comments.

"The day following our receiving second phase proposals, the evaluation of their bidders' financial documents was already underway. Thus, we have contacted their respective countries' banks to verify their financial status," said the source.

It may take at Tk 500 crore to complete the flyover which will be constructed on the basis of Build-Operate-Own (BOT) basis, said sources.

Three short listed companies Belhasa Accom Lasa, a joint venture of Dubai-Canada and Bangladesh, Cord-Percon, a Singapore-Malaysia

joint venture and Projalama Construction Adn Ltd., a Malaysian firm have participated in the second phase proposals to build seven kilometre long Jatrabari-Gulistan flyover.

The construction will be awarded after evaluation by the DCC, Dhaka Transport Coordination Board, Local Government Engineering Department, Institute of Architects, Bangladesh, Institution of Engineers, Bangladesh and international experts.

The proposed four-lane flyover, with two by-lanes, will reduce traffic pressure on Dhaka city and enable the people within 50 kilometres of Dhaka city to commute.

Mishuk drivers demand a fair rate of pay

Many mishuks still lack meters while those with meters refuse to use them

BISHAWJIT DAS

With the ultimatum expiring on August 1, most mishuks, the four-stroke locally made three wheelers have not bothered to install any meters. Those who installed meters are plying the city streets without using them.

Police have still not taken any action against those who have failed to install meters.

Police say most mishuks do not have any route permits and therefore they are only allowed to operate in the lanes and by-lanes of the city.

Deputy Commissioner of Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) Ansar Ali Khan Pathan told The Daily Star only 170 Mishuks out of 270 have route permits to ply in the city.

Although a mishuk runs on petrol and octane authorities have nonetheless set the fare in line with CNG three wheelers. CNGs charge Tk.12 for the first two kilometers and Tk. 5 for each of the following kilometers of the journey.

Leaders of the Mishuk Owners Association had urged Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA) to rethink about the fare on the ground that price of petrol is higher than compressed natural gas. The traffic department had earlier asked the Mishuk-owners to paint their vehicles in grey and white so that it could be differentiated from CNG three wheelers.

Mishuk drivers said a meter cost between Tk. 6,000 and 6,500 to install and their earning did not actually enable them to afford installation of meters.

Some mishuk owners claimed that the time to install meters has been extended. "I asked one sergeant at Tejgoan thana whether the police would arrest those plying without metres," said Rafiq, a mishuk owner. "He said he did not get any orders like that."

DC Traffic (north) Ansar Ali said that they had not

extended the time for the mishuks to install meters.

He also said the police would clamp down on mishuks plying the city streets without mishuks.

Many commuters however complained that most of the CNGs, taxicabs and mishuks are unwilling to carry passengers on meter fares. They invariably demand up to Tk ten on top of the meter fare.

"I have to starve if I follow the fare chart," claimed a mishuk driver. The expense for every litre of CNG is Tk. 7.5, where as it is Tk. 30 and

35 for a litre of petrol and octane respectively.

Most of the cabs, including CNGs usually complain of long waits at filling stations and say that they compensate the time spent at the filling stations by charging 'a little more'.

All mishuks were asked to install meters by Feb 1, 2003 but later the time was extended up to August 1. Police however maintained that mishuks could ply in the city's peripheral areas without meters.

Teachers in confusion

AVIK SANWAR RAHMAN

Two groups of teachers under the same banner of Bangladesh Non Government Primary Teachers Association, are at loggerheads over whether to launch an agitation program for nationalisation of the non-government primary teachers and the schools.

One group held a press conference on September 1 at the Dhaka Reporters Unity auditorium protesting the planned hunger strike on September 3 at Osmany Udyan and branded the other group as a 'fake' organisation.

Akkas Ali Sheikh, the secretary

general of Bangladesh Non Government Primary Teachers Association alleged that the so-called leaders of the agitating association did not represent primary school teachers. He also said that the Association was registered in 1992 and its head office is located in 99 Nawabpur Road and alleged that the other association was using a phony registration number and letterhead to confuse the teachers.

The speakers at the press conference showed a letterhead to the journalists which mentioned their temporary office address as 23/2 Tophkana Road, Dhaka. Underneath, there was the hunger-strike call by the former President Md.

Samsul Alam, who is also the President of the newly formed Noin Government Primary Teachers Association.

Ali informed that 75,232 teachers of the 20,000 registered primary schools were at present drawing salary of which 90 percent is provided by the government. He showed the Government Order (GO) regarding their 10-point demand.

He said that they have already complained against the other association's activities to the Deputy Police Commissioner and Dhaka City Corporation.

When contacted Samsul Alam said that he was the elected president of the Bangladesh Non Govern-

ment Primary Teachers Association from 1996 to 2001 adding, that he was supporting the movement to realise the ultimate goal of nationalisation of all the primary schools of the country.

"Unfortunately the secretary general opposed the movement. With the mandate of the teachers I have formed another association to carry on the movement for nationalisation of the primary teachers and schools," said Alam.

He also claimed that Prime Minister Khaleda Zia had declared nationalisation of the primary teachers at a meeting on September 10 at Osmany Udyan as part of her election pledge.

useful telephone numbers



LIBRARY & INFO-



OUTING



CITY BUS ROUTE



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
Banmgladesh Express Co. Ltd.- 9565114
Bangladesh Courier Sercive- 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

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

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

Bus No. Route

1	Gulistan-Shahbagh-Banglamotor-Farmgate-Mirpur 10, 11, 12
2	Gulistan-Shahbagh-Banglamotor-Farmgate-Mirpur 1, 2
3	Gulistan-Shahbagh-Farmgate-Mahakhali-Airport-Azampur
4	Shyampur-Motijheel-Shahbagh-Farmgate-Airport-Tongi
5	Sayedabad-Kamalapur-Motijheel-Airport-Joydebpur-Gazipur
6 A	Kamalapur-Motijheel-Gulistan-Shahbagh-Farmgate-Gulistan 1, 2
6 B	Kamalapur-Motijheel-Gulistan-Maghbazar-Nabisco-Gulshan 1, 2
6 C	Motijheel Shapla chattr- Malibagh- Farmgate- Gulshan 2
7	Sadarghat-Gulistan-Maghbazar-Nabisco-Gulshan 2
8	Chittagong-Motijheel-Shahbagh-Farmgate-Asad Gate-Kalyanpur-Gabtol
9	Demra Rani mahal-Motijheel-Kalbagan-Shyamoli-Mirpur 1, 10, 11, 12
10	Sadarghat-Gulistan-Kakrail-Malibagh-Rampura-Biwa Road-Tongi Bridge
11	Sayedabad-Motijheel-Fakirapool-Maghbazar-Mohakhali-Tongi Bridge
11/A	Sayedabad-Khilgoan-Malibagh-Rampura-Airport-Tongi Bridge
12	Shanir Akhra-Shahbagh-Farmgate-Asadgate-Mohammadpur
13	Motijheel-Shahbagh-New Market-Jhigatola-Shangkar-Mohammedpur
14	Signboard -Motijheel-Shahbagh-New Market-Shyamoli-Mirpur 1, 12
15	Chittagong Road-Motijheel-Shahbagh-Farmgate-Mirpur 12
24	Gulistan-Maghbazar-Mohakhali-Airport-Uttara-Bipile

Starts from

Golap Shah Mazar
Phoolbaria bus station
Phoolbaria bus station
Shyampur
Sayedabad
Kamalapur
Kamalapur
Motijheel Shaplachatter
Sadarghat
Chittagong Road
Demra Ranimahal
Sadarghat
Sayedabad
Syedabad
Shanir Akhra
Motijheel
Signboard (Chittagong Road)
Chittagong Road
Gulistan