

Sewer overflows in Gulshan

Extra manholes needed to improve situation

FAIZUL KHAN TANIM

Residents of Gulshan 1 said the stench caused by continuous sewerage water overflow at several points along the road to the Tejgaon industrial area is unbearable.

One of the two noticeable points is in front of the fast food chains and the other near the Lebanese restaurant.

"I have to walk a certain distance to get to the bus stop or taxi stand, and I have to get

Meanwhile, the sewer water continues to stink, bringing in flies and germs creating health and hygiene hazards.

The restaurants along the road suffer this most.

"It is quite unpleasant to see sewer water just outside an eatery. It gives a bad smell and is very unhygienic," said Amena Khatun, another Gulshan resident, while a few others echoed the same.

Complaints by the managers of these restaurants to Wasa

link road said the stretch from Gulshan 1 point to approximately the National Shooting Club faces problems.

Vehicles coming from the Gulshan end bring in the sewer water spreading the bad odour to a fair distance.

This overflowing sewer water also causes traffic congestion at the Gulshan 1 intersection as many vehicles drive very slowly so that the dirty water does not splash on pedestrians, said another

supply and sewerage authority (WASA) manholes," he said.

"We need extra manholes, and have requested DCC's permission to construct them, but the decision is still hanging," said Mushfiqur Rahman, Wasa's zone-5 (Mohakhali) executive engineer, who is in charge of the sewerage system for Gulshan 1.

"As soon as we set up extra manholes, the problem of overflowing sewer water will



Leaking sewerage in front of Arysha Restaurant in Gulshan 1.

across the dirty water to get transport," said Ahsan Miya, a Gulshan 1 resident.

Vehicles passing by have no sympathy towards pedestrians as the speed over the dirty water.

"I have been sprayed with the reeking sewerage water many times, as vehicles speed by," said another resident.

seem to have fallen on deaf ears.

"We made several complaints to Wasa and concerned authorities in last one and half months, but no action has been taken as yet," said Khairul Alam of Arysha Restaurant in Gulshan.

Another manager of a restaurant along the Tejgaon

resident.

There is nothing much the Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) can do about the matter according to Mohammad Mahmudul Haque, zonal executive officer, zone-9, Gulshan office.

"The water leaks and overflows from the water

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subside," he added.

"We expect to go for a mass cleaning drive in Gulshan and adjoining areas right after Eid holidays and things come back to normal conditions. Hopefully we will be able to give priority to the sewer leakage problem and work it out," said Rahman.

Dhaka Book Fair 2006

Dissatisfied publishers, visitors



WAHIDA MITU

The incongruity among organisers, publishers and writers has made the 12th Dhaka Book Fair less appealing, although the organisers blamed the Eid festival during the fair for the low turn out.

Since the first day of the fair there has been an average of only 1,000 visitors a day, compared to around 2,000 people who frequented the fair last year.

The fair organised by Jatiya Grantha Kendra has been taking place in January every year since 1995 to mark January 1 as National Book day and January 1-7 as National Book week.

The beginning of the fair did not attract many visitors, but a rush was seen towards the last few days.

Most publishers and booksellers blamed the organisers for inadequate publicity on the fair.

"The advertising wasn't sufficient," alleged a publisher

preferring anonymity. "Advertisements on Bangladesh Television (BTV) aren't enough. The other private channels too should have been made use of along with advertisements in the print media," he added.

"I know that the Dhaka Book fair is held every January," said Rumon Islam. "As I did not see any advertisement, I made my own inquiries and here I am," he added.

Samudra Gupta, a poet of 70's opined: "They organise the fair as a yearly routine programme, which ultimately does not appeal to the visitors."

However the organisers said: "We informed the media about the fair through a press conference and advertising within our limits."

"It is also the duty of the publishers to advertise about their new publications in the fair," said Shafiqul Islam, director of Jatiya Grantha Kendra.

Some visitors appreciated the disciplined manner the fair was

organised.

"The arrangement is satisfactory but if writers were present at the fair more frequently it would have attracted more book lovers," said Tamanna Afrin, a Dhaka University (DU) student.

The director of Kendra said they had arranged a few programmes where eminent writers and different literary artists were present.

"We had requested all the publishers to bring the writers to the fair for interaction with readers," said the director. "If they are not able to coax the writers there is nothing we can do about it," he added.

Most publishers did not display new publications and thus could not invite the writers.

Some publishers brought out new books, among them University Press Limited (UPL) published 12 books, Ananya Prakashani -- six, Panjeree Publications -- five and Shuchipatra -- four.

The publishers said research-

oriented books, children's books, science fictions, adapted books and books from eminent writers were well received by the readers.

Some other renowned publishing houses participated too, but had no new publications.

"We are preparing ourselves for the upcoming Ekushey Book Fair which attracts more visitors," said Pallab of Mawla Brothers.

"Both two book fairs are held in the beginning of each year, but there in the following months," he added. "Since the Ekushey Book Fair cannot be delayed, another fair can be held in the middle of the year instead of the beginning," he further said.

Al Mahmud, an eminent poet thanked the organizers for the strict security measures taken, considering the present situation, but thought the timing was not right.

"There must be a gap between this and the Ekushey Book Fair, which starts in two weeks," he said.

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