

# Ottis: An old name in creating fragrance

DURDANA GHAS

Meandering through the lanes of Armanitola and Mitford of Old Dhaka one's olfactory nerves will be tantalised from a strong and somewhat pungent smell emanating from a variety of perfume and chemical shops.

The overpowering aroma, which originates from a blend of perfumes, would make someone wobble if she is not a frequenter to this place.

Rows of shops on the both sides of the narrow lanes will offer tempting fragrance to allure the passers-by stepping into their territory oblivious to the fact.

Once caught by the smell she has to look around and find chains of perfumery outlets with big glass cabinets where bottles are stacked in neat rows.

From the cluster of shops the sight of Ottis Perfumery House catches attention for its roominess with antique looks, which was the trailblazer in perfume business in Old Dhaka.

KP Mohammad, a Madras and founder of the shop set it up in 1948 when he came to Dhaka from Kolkata to claim money from a trader to whom his father had sold a consignment of perfumes. His father had a perfume outlet in Kolkata which was set up in 1928. The shop is now run by his other sons there.

Unable to pay back, the trader gave the consignment back and Mohammad thought of selling the goods here in Dhaka instead of taking those back to Kolkata. While selling those in a makeshift shop he came up with the idea of his own shop and whereupon set up Ottis.

After a few years into this

There are many kinds of perfumes with regal and flamboyant names like Darbar, Kachabeli, Kosturi, Jannatul Ferdous, Sultan, Gul-e-Lala, Bokul, Hasn-e-Heena, Magnet, Gandharaj and Jasmine. All of them are locally made though the raw chemicals are sometime imported. "Among all these perfumes we specialise in making atar. Darbar, Kachabeli, Bokul and Kosturi are also our specialties," said Ansari

business Ottis witnessed perfume shops cropping up in the area to cater to the demand of fragrance loving Dhakaites and from other parts of the country.

"Only ten years ago there were only 25 perfume shops but now there are hundreds of them. In spite of that our perfumes are special," said KP Ameer Ali, proprietor of Ottis.

"We sell perfumes only and most of our customers are from Old Dhaka and the district towns," said Ali.

"Perfumes are used not only as fragrance but also in making incense burner, snow powder, cold cream, cosmetics, jorda (a kind of preparation of tobacco) and biri (a kind of cigarette wrapped in tree-leaf), said Tamimul-Ansari, chemist and salesman of Ottis.

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"Chemical companies and traders from all over the country especially from Khulna, Bogra, and Rangpur come to our shop to buy perfumes," said Md Sultan, manager of Ottis.

"Starting from Shab-e-Meraj to the last day of Ramadan is the peak season for our business. We have hectic days at that time. Perfume vendors selling in front of mosques and at busy intersections also buy from us," said Sultan.

The manager and his salesmen spoke in their own language but all working there are fluent in Bangla too.

When asked how perfumes are made Ansari said that they followed a random process in fermenting perfumes rather than having a specified way.

"We mix some chemicals and

then test the smell of it. If it smells nice then a perfume is made. Sometimes one in fifty mixtures is perfect enough to be a good perfume," he said while smelling a stick from time to time.

"I have been buying perfumes from here for the last forty years," said Abdul Kuddus, an apothecary from Brahmanbaria and a regular customer of Ottis.

"I come here once a month to buy Gultaria, Daruchini and other perfumes to make external medicines for headaches, burns and bruises," said Kuddus while sitting with a big pack of bottles and chatting with the salesmen while sipping a cup of tea.

"There is a good market in Brahmanbaria for balms, perfumes and tooth powders. Many other perfume companies and traders in my town also buy from here. I did not find the liquids adulterated since I am buying from 1965," he said.



A worker at Ottis shows his products

## Shaheed Anwara Park gets new lease of life



Renovated recently Shaheed Anwara park in Farm Gate is now a relief for city dwellers

WAHIDA MITU

Shaheed Anwara Park, situated near the busy intersection of Farmgate, has recently turned into a safer place after renovation by the Public Works Department (PWD).

Now the park bears a new look with a proper boundary, walkways and flowerbeds.

According to concerned sources, earlier the park was in a dilapidated state and without any boundary. As result it turned into a mugger's den and different kinds of unsocial activities used to take place there. Two years earlier the authority put a boundary wall around the park with security guards at the two gates and evicted illegal constructions near the park.

The total area of the park is 5.21 acre and total cost of renovation is Tk 55 lac including the cost of building a boundary with gates, grills, footpath, flowerbeds and a new connecting road for the convenience of the passers-by.

"For the renovation we did not spend extra money as the cost was covered from yearly allocation of the park," said Jamaluddin, sub divisional engineer of (civil) PWD.

"There are three security guards at present and the number will be increased after the total construction of the park," he said.

It was renovated to give the city dwellers a place to walk, to keep it free from muggers and increase the beauty of the area.

"The renovation work is not finished yet and will be completed soon after getting new fund," informed Jamaluddin.

## Defiance is the game!

FROM PAGE 21

land before it was derequisitioned, Chowdhury said: "How can I fight for the land unless I take possession of it?"

Responding to how he claims the ownership of a canal despite the wetland protection act, Chowdhury said: "I will bother about it later. I have made some arrangements to face that."

"I have asked the Dhaka WASA to shift the Begunbari canal to CS (Cadastral Survey) no-178 from where its present location," he further said, "My negotiation with Wasa is on and hopefully it (WASA) will divert the canal."

On Chowdhury's application to the land minister for derequisition, land secretary asked the deputy commissioner (DC) of Dhaka to submit a report on the basis of on-the-ground assessment on whether the remaining land can be released. The DC is yet to submit the report.

According to sources BR's former Dhaka divisional estate officer Nurul Kabir Siddiqui formally recommended that the 'unused land be handed over to howdhury'. Siddiqui's recom-

mendation clearly hinted at an underhand deal between the occupier and BR officials in blatant disregard to the wetland protection act.

Though earmarked as a flood plain in the Dhaka Metropolitan Development Plan, the land grabbers are occupying Begunbari canal taking advantage of legal loopholes and government's laxity.

The DMDP clearly indicates that densely populated areas like Maghbazar, Tejgaon, a part of Gulshan, Badda and Rampura along the canal will face severe water logging if the canal and its catchment areas are earth-filled.

The Rajuk has drawn a plan, as part of its Sonargaon-Hatirjheel development project, to restore the canal as a natural and strong sewage discharge system stretching up to Rampura Bridge.

Prime Minister's Principal Secretary Kamal Uddin Siddiqui, who heads the good governance committee at the PM office, expressed his anger at the ongoing earth-filling spree in the Begunbari Hatirjheel

canal at a meeting on December 18 last year, according to meeting sources.

The committee in a resolution clearly instructed BR to take measures to stop earth filling in the Begunbari canal, re-excavate the portion filled-up for two CNG stations and evict other illegal occupiers encroaching the canal, said a member of the committee.

Following the instruction of the good governance committee, communications ministry cancelled licence of three CNG fuel-filling companies, said Anhar Mahmud, BR divisional manager, but there was no such instruction to re-excavate the portion filled-up for two CNG stations.

The BR authorities had earlier granted permission to them to set up the stations by earth filling Begunbari Canal along Tongi Diversion Road.

## health, busservices, airlines & train timing

### OSPITALS & CLINICS

**Ahsania Mission Cancer & General Hospital**  
9008919, 8051618

**Apollo Hospitals Network**  
9891680-4, 01713046684/85  
Emergency no. 9896623, 0171409000

**Bangladesh Medical College & Hospital**  
9118202, 8115843

**Central Hospital**  
9660015-19,

**China Bangla Hospital (JV) Ltd**  
8913674

**Dhaka Medical College Hospital**  
8626812-16

**Gana Shasthyo Kendra**  
8617208, 8617383, 8620178,

**Greenland Hospital**  
8912663

**Gulshan Mother & Child Clinic**  
8822738, 8812992

**Holy Family Hospital**  
8311721-25

**Islami Bank Hospital**  
9333739

**Japan Bangladesh Friendship Hospital**  
8828855, 8827575

**Labaid Cardiac Hospital**  
8610793-8

**Marie Stopes Clinic**  
8821874

**Medinova Medical Services Ltd**  
8620353,

**Monowara Hospital**  
8318135, 8319802

**Pangu Hospital**  
9112150, 9113041

**PG Hospital (BSMMU)**  
9614545-9, 9612550-4

**Rashmono General Hospital**  
8317606, 9557354, 8317819

**Ratan's Dental Clinic**  
9111090

**Salimullah Medical College Hospital**  
7319002-6

**Samorita Hospital Ltd**  
9131901

**Shahid Suhrawardy Hospital**  
9122560-78

**Shishu Hospital**  
8116061-2, 9119119

### BLOOD BANK

**Bangladesh Red Crescent Blood Bank**  
9115653

**Modern Clinic & Blood Center**  
9883948

**Sandhani, Dhaka Medical College**  
9668690

### BUS SERVICES

**Drooti**  
8014563

**Eagle Paribahan**  
7101504

**Green Line Paribahan**  
9339623, 9342580, 8353005

**Hanif Enterprise**  
9120116

**Keya Paribahan**  
7101894, 7101250, 9121280

**Modern Enterprise**  
9123743

**Neptune A/C Coach Service**  
7101945, 7101951, 9123092

**Shohag Paribahan (Pvt) Ltd**  
9334152, 8316766, 8126293

**Shoukhin Paribahan**  
8014397, 9001796

**Silk Line**  
7102461

**Shyamoli Paribahan**  
9333803

### AIRLINES

**lines**  
**Aeroflot**  
9559930, 9559111, Fax: 9563787

**Air India**  
8617783, 8611929, Fax: 9670591

**Biman Bangladesh Airlines**  
8917400-19 9560151, 9559610  
Airport Office: 8917400, Fax: 8913005

**British Airways**  
8815111, Fax: 8815346,

**Cathay Pacific**  
9557117, Fax: 9562667

**Druk Air**  
9862243, 9892862,

**Emirates**  
9892801, 9885574-75

**GMG Airlines**  
8825845-9, Airport Office:  
8960404, 8915699, Fax: 8826115

**Gulf Air**  
9130123-5, Airport Office: 8914573

**Indian Airlines Ltd**  
9555915, 9557813,

**Kuwait Airways**  
9115182, 9118829

**Malaysia Airlines**  
9888211-20  
Airport Office: 8916953, Fax: 9890478

**PIA**  
9349293-5, Fax: 9345300

**Singapore Airlines**  
8811504-7, 9883259  
Airport Office: 8911928, Fax: 8811503

**Thai Airways**  
8314711-18, 8914343

**Virgin Atlantic Airways**  
8816324-5, Fax: 9896481

### TRAIN TIMING

**Subarna Express**  
Leaves Dhaka at 4:30 pm

**Mahanagar Prabhati**  
Leaves Dhaka at 7:30 am

**Mahanagar Godhuli**  
Leaves Dhaka at 3:15 pm

**Turna**  
Leaves Dhaka at 11:00 pm

**Parabat Express**  
Leaves Dhaka at 6:40 am

**Joyantika Express**  
Leaves Dhaka at 12:45 pm

**Upaban Express**  
Leaves Dhaka at 9:45 pm

**Tista Express**  
Leaves Dhaka at 7:00 am

**Ekata Express**  
Leaves Dhaka at 5:00 pm

**Apakul Express**  
Leaves Dhaka at 8:00 pm

**Agnibeena Express**  
Leaves Dhaka at 9:20 pm

Reaches Chittagong at 10:35 pm

Reaches Chittagong at 1:55 pm

Reaches Chittagong at 10:55 pm

Reaches Sylhet at 2:30 pm

Reaches Sylhet at 9:20 pm

Reaches Sylhet at 6:40 am

Reaches Bahadurabad at 1:05 pm

Reaches Bahadurabad at 11:15

Reaches Noakhali at 5:00 am

Reaches Jagannath at 2:30 pm

### 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

**Information Resource Center, The American Center-** 8813440-4, 9886395-9

**British Council-** 8618867-8, 8618905-7

**Community Development Library-** 8113769, 8113604

**Goethe Institute Int'l- Dhaka-** 9126525-6

**Indian Information Centre & Cultural Library-** 8850141-2

**The Russian Cultural Centre-** 9116314, 9118531, 9118314

**Drik Photo Gallery-** 9120125, 8112954, 8123412

**Press Institute of Bangladesh (PIB)** 9330081-4