

RELOCATION OF KARWAN BAZAR WHOLESALE MARKET

Might take more time than expected

KAUSAR ISLAM AYON

The relocation of Karwan Bazar wholesale vegetable market is likely to take years although the Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (ECNEC) approved a Tk 206 crore budget earlier this month, said Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) officials.

The project includes the setting up of four wholesale markets in city periphery at Tongi, Gabtali, Jatrabari and Keraniganj, but the dispute between businessmen and authorities is not over regarding the place where Karwan Bazar vegetable wholesale market would be relocated.

Business leaders in the Karwan Bazar area, although not opposing to the relocation, have placed a request to relocate it at Hatir Jheel beside the Tongi Diversion Road.

"We appreciate the government decision to relocate the wholesale market from here as this area has emerged as the next important commercial area after Motijheel. We would request the

government to relocate it at Hatir Jheel," said Nabi Solaiman, president of two wholesaler organisations -- Karwan Bazar Khudra Kanchamal Arat Babsayi Bahumukhi Samabay Samity Limited (KBKABSSSL) and Karwan Bazar Kanchamal Hawkers Samity (KBKHS).

The Infrastructural and Environmental Improvement Project of Dhaka City under the DCC will implement the project. A DCC official said the project would take time to be implemented as it has been passed at the last stages of this government's tenure.

"Although government said they considered the relocation of the second most important business hub in the city very seriously, they had to take political matters into consideration and is the reason in the delay," said the official.

He also said that fate of this project is dependant on the will of the next government.

Karwan Bazar was declared a commercial area more than a decade ago but none of the governments during this period

showed interest in removing obstacles or increase infrastructure facilities like car parking and others.

Since this declaration a number of prestigious business offices moved to Karwan Bazar, but no fruitful step were taken to provide them with the facilities a commercial zone deserves.

The area is choked with thousands of illegal shops blocking all major roads, the area designated for a car park, a children's park and a network of footpaths.

On the other hand the largest wholesale vegetable market in the country produces more than 200 tonnes of biodegradable waste that is dumped alongside the main roads.

But DCC and Local Government and Rural Development (LGRD) officials said the government has taken firm stand not to establish any wholesale market at Hatir Jheel.

"We cannot set up the wholesale market at Hatir Jheel because the objective of relocating Karwan Bazar is to make the central part of the city free from chaos that a wholesale market



Wholesale vegetable market at Karwan Bazar.

creates and relocating it to Hatir Jheel would not be the solution," said a DCC official.

The official said another reason that the relocation would not be wise is because the proposed Panthapath-Rampura road will go through the Hatir Jheel, which would be an important roadway.

City planner Dr Nazrul Islam supporting the Karwan Bazar

wholesale market relocation said that a vegetable and fish market could not remain in the second most important commercial zone in the city.

He also said that filling up the water body Hatir Jheel, would create water logging in the adjoining area.

However, the business leaders hoped that the government

would listen to their demand to relocate the market to Hatir Jheel.

"We will not be bent on establishing our demand, but hope that the government will listen to us before implementing the project," said Faruque Molla, president Karwan Bazar Fruit

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What is going on at Abahani playground?

WAHIDA MITU

The Abahani playground in Dhanmondi, one of the rare green fields in the city, fails to create a sporting and recreational atmosphere mainly because of managerial drawbacks.

While the National Spots Council (NSC), Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) and Abahani Club officials dispute over its jurisdiction, outsiders have occupied large chunks of the playground, having a restaurant, shops, and makeshift homes.

These spots have been rented out to individuals, who have made the area a dwelling place, and have also displayed a large portrait of an influential political leader who happens to live in the neighbourhood.

"The BCB's dressing room is a regular gambling centre, where gambling sessions take place every evening. A local club called the Young Ones runs the gambling sessions charging clients hefty commissions," said a concerned source.

According to Abahani, BCB and NSC officials, Young Ones has taken over the dressing room without any permission, and have rented out the restaurant, and the large portion of the playground.

Although hundreds of chil-

dren and youngsters use the playground daily, it is a 'taboo' area to local residents, particularly women and children. The restaurant and shops on the southeastern corner of the playground create a permanent nuisance. Drug addicts are found hovering around the restaurant and shops day and night, and families do not dare to go to the playground for recreation.

"We are aware of source of encroachment and nuisances created, and we demand immediate removal of these illegal structures off the playground," said a resident of the area.

"We leased the playground four years back and even then these businesses were going in full swing," said an Abahani Club official.

"The occupiers are not hampering us at present, so we did

not say anything about illegal occupation as it is empty and we are not making use of it at present," said the official. "We plan to renovate the existing gallery, will evict the illegal occupiers at that time," he added.

Faruq Rahman, Young Ones president admitted that individuals have encroached the playground but denied having

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One of the illegal structures on the Abahani playground.

Assault on passengers continues

KAUSAR ISLAM AYON

Security personnel at the entrance to the Zia International Airport (ZIA) physically assaulted three men, one bound for Hong-Kong yesterday.

According to the victims -- three brothers including the passenger Samsur Rahman -- arrived at the ZIA at 11:00 pm in a private car. The security guards (mostly the Ansars) stopped them on the driveway to the departure lounge about 100 yards away from the gate.

According to security officials, relatives of passengers are not supposed to be stopped on the driveway.

"They (security personnel) are not supposed ask relatives of any passenger to get off the vehicle. Relatives are allowed to come up to the entrance of the departure gate," said Abdul Awal, ZIA's chief security officer.

When the three brothers asked how then other vehicles with relatives of passengers were allowed up to the entrance of the departure lounge the on-duty Ansars got involved in an altercation.

When two brothers asked for an explanation for such an illogical demand the guards started swearing

at them, which was followed by a scuffle by the two parties.

At this point about 25 Ansars armed with batons pounced on the three men including the passenger and beat them up mercilessly.

"They beat us so badly that their batons broke and until they were satisfied we were injured enough, they continued," said Tanvir Ahmed, brother of the passenger and one of the victims.

Later the three victims were given medical attention for the injuries they sustained in the attack.

The passenger, somehow, managed to catch his flight after changing his bloodstained clothes and obtaining first aid.

After the passenger had left, the two brothers went to the Airport Police Station where they and their father, who arrived later, filed a General Diary (GD), but the police station did not want to file a case.

"Police did not take any action against the Ansar personnel showing various excuses. They only allowed us to file a GD," said Amin Hossain, father of three victims, a renowned person himself.

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GROUP MURDER IN DHAKA

Six murders traumatise family for life

RAIHAN SABUKTAGIN

For Kazi Sirajul Haque and his family, life has become a nightmare; still shocked at the brutal murders of six of his domestic workers on Friday evening; his brain pumping hard against his skull searching for reasons behind these murders.

His children are so traumatised that they refuse to live in the same house, situated in Pallabi in the

Mirpur area.

Police and other law enforcing agencies are baffled with the horrible group murder, and suspect at least five motives behind this brutal incident.

Sirajul told the press that the six domestics helps were at home when he and his family went to his younger brother Kazi Ashraf Hossain's house for an iftar party. The murders took place on the second floor of a five-storey under-construction building,

where Sirajul lives with his family.

The murders are assumed to have taken place between 8 and 10pm according to Sirajul's wife as she had spoken to one of the murdered, Khadiza, 14, around 8:04 pm on telephone.

Sirajul's wife and daughter returned home at around 9:45pm and found the door open. "Blood was oozing through the door," Sirajul told the reporters.

The other murdered are guard Milon, 27, and servants Munir, 11,

Rizia, 38, her son Tofael, 15, and Anna, 11. The victims' hands were tied behind their backs.

Sirajul filed a robbery-cum-murder case with Pallabi Police Station in the early hours of Saturday.

In the meantime, the family has temporarily moved out of their home, as advised by the local police.

Of the suspicions and suspects, the various sources in the police and other law enforcers

have Shahadat a top terror of the area on top of the list.

Law enforcers said that one of the reasons may be that Shahadat and his gang might be behind the incident to create panic in the area in order to extract toll easily, but there has been no incident where Shahadat had asked Sirajul for tolls.

Another reason for this incident may be that the persons involved in the murder may have done so to avoid being recognised by the

six workers.

The law enforcers said they are also trying to find out whether any incident had taken place in Chudanga, the home district of Sirajul Haque, that could have led to the killing of his domestic helps.

To this Sirajul said that he was not involved in any kind of politics and there is hardly any chance of this being a reason for the murders.

Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) Commissioner SM

Mizanur Rahman and Joint Commissioner Shahidul Islam visited the crime spot.

The DMP commissioner said that this could not be an incident of robbery. The motive could have also been to disturb the law and order situation in the area.

Another suspicion is that some individuals may want to put Sirajul under mental pressure and instill fear in him for whatever reasons unknown, but Sirajul said that he did not have any such enemies that

might want him to undergo such situations.

Sirajul at the moment is lost, unable to understand why someone would have wanted to commit such an inhuman crime, and what the reasons and motives are.

"I insist on finding out the reasons, or else my family and I would never be able to come to terms with living a normal life," Sirajul said.

city express

The latest crop of quotes from the city's press -- words worth repeating, we feel, for their humour, insight or sheer outrageousness. Star City does not necessarily support the opinions expressed in this column.

"We [Bangladesh] have taken many things from the world, now we have given something to the world"

-- Professor Muhammad Yunus
 Founder, Grameen Bank
 Told reporters after receiving the news of his winning the Nobel Peace Prize 2006 for pioneering the use of micro-credit to benefit poor entrepreneurs, on Friday. Source: The Daily Star

"Power problem exists not only in our country but also in America. If we are reelected we will solve the problem"

-- Khaleda Zia
 Prime Minister
 Said at a public meeting at Demra Ghat and Shyampur in the city, on Sunday. Source: Prothom Alo

"Actually, there was no governance in the country in the last five years"

-- Sheikh Hasina
 AL President and Leader of the Opposition
 Said while addressing a gathering of eminent personalities at a hotel in the city, on Tuesday. Source: The Daily Star

"You go and remove the dust"

-- Moudud Ahmed
 Law Minister
 Told reporters when asked why the bill styled Code of Criminal Procedure (Amendment) Bill, 2006, which concerned separation of the judiciary, gathered dust in the parliament for over six months, on Tuesday. Source: The Daily Star

"Why are you throwing wild questions at me regularly? Learn journalism first and then question me"

-- MA Aziz
 Chief Election Commissioner
 Told reporters who asked him if he is going to resign when he was coming out of his office, on Sunday. Source: The Daily Star

"Time has come to change the leadership of Awami League"

-- Tarique Rahman
 Senior Joint Secretary General, BNP
 Said while addressing an Iftar party at LGED auditorium in the city, on Tuesday. Source: The Daily Star

"[Students who cannot afford to buy admission forms] should not aspire to study in the university, they would rather enroll at madrasas"

-- Prof Altaf Hossain
 Vice Chancellor, Rajshahi University
 Said when leaders of Progressive Students' Alliance met him to submit a memorandum protesting an increase in the price of admission forms, on Tuesday. Source: The Daily Star

"If the political parties demonstrate with oars, sticks and sickles to get their rights, why don't we launch such a movement against so-called workers' unrest?"

-- Rashid Ahmed Hossain
 Nexos Group
 Said at an emergency meeting of garment owners presided over by the BGMEA President which demanded action against RMG workers agitation over scant pay, on Thursday. Source: The Daily Star

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