Improving City's Civic Spaces

By ASM Nurunnabi

According to architects and city planners, the term 'civic space' means a place where city dwellers of all strata, irrespective of class, religion or age, meet to socialise themselves with one another. Philosophically expressed, civic spaces may also be places where we can feel the earth beneath our feet and when earth yields beneath our feet; it gives us a unique feeling of pleasure which pavement never does. In Dhaka, some civic spaces have emerged over the past years in consonance with the needs and aspirations of the common urban mass

Unlike many European and American cities, the city dwellers of Dhaka are provided with a few truly designed civic spaces. They are mainly the Ramna Park, Suhrawardy Uddyan. Osmani Uddyan and Sangsad Bhaban Plaza.

Varieties of human events and activities contribute to the evolution of a successful civic space. For examples, we may cite the New Baily Road which some people call "Natak Sarani". Holding of varieties of urban functions over the years has transformed this stretch of road into a notable civic space. A number of fast food shops, apartments, residences, sari shops, book shops and a couple of drama theatres act as multidimensional points of attraction for different types of people with different needs.

Another type of spontaneous civic spaces has evolved around some national or historical events. For examples,

At least five persons,

including three of a same

family were killed and 16

injured in two road accidents

in Jhenidah and Pabna yes-

sister and their grandfather

were killed in a road accident

at Alampur on Kushtia-Jhe-

A minor boy, his younger

Police said the accident oc-

curred at about 9:30 am when

a rickshaw van carrying them

from the town to Kushtia was

smashed by a Barisal-bound

truck. The truck overturned as

died on the spot. Their grand-

father Abul Hossain, 50, suc-

cumbed to his injury at Sadar

rickshaw van and the rick-

shawpuller were admitted to

Sadar Hospital with serious

managed to flee. A case was

filed with Kushtia Sadar police.

were killed and 14 others in-

jured when a bus collided with

a truck at Ataikula bazar in

Sathia thana on Pabna-

Shahabuddin Pramanik, 60.of

Syampur in Dhaka and

Shahidul Islam, 25, of Tebaria

From Page 1

Dhanmondi thana filed the

case against the reporter and

Aiker Kagoi Editor Kazi Sha-

hed Ahmed on warrant from

tions deal with spreading mal-

ice against a lawful govern-

ment, publication of reports

containing malicious matters

against the army as well as re-

ports damaging the security of

Kabir was taken to the Dhan-

mondi thana where he stayed

Chief Metropolitan Magistrate

court and later sent to jail at

Dhanmondi residence of Kazi

Shahed Ahmed! However, the

editor was not at home during

Kagoj editor and the chief re-

porter was apparently filed

after the newspaper in one of

its recent reports said that the

army was unwilling to carry out

BSS adds: Bangladesh Fed-

eral Union of Journalists

(BFUJ) President Igbal Sobhan

Chowdhury and Secretary

General M Shajahan Mia and

(DUJ) President Abul Kalam

Azad and General Secretary Az-

izul Islam Bhuiyan yesterday

expressed their deep concern

and resentment over the ar-

rest of the Dainik Alker Kagol

chief reporter Sved Borhan

condemned the attack on the

Dainik Dinkal office and urged

upon all to refrain from attack-

ing newsmen and news organi-

sations for the greater interest

of democracy and freedom of

The journalists leaders also

its election duties, an allega-

tion the army denied.

The case against Alker

until 2:30 pm yesterday

around 3 pm yesterday.

From the Ajker Kagoj office.

He was produced before the

Earlier, police also raided

The above penal code sec-

in Pabna.

the CMM court.

the country.

the raid.

Kabir.

press...

The dead were identified as

Aiker Kagoj

Nagarbari highway yesterday.

Jewel, 9, and Tuktuki, 5,

Another passenger of the

The driver of the truck

Meanwhile, two people

one of its wheels fell apart.

terday, reports UNB.

nidah highway

we may mention Shahid Minar premises, Bangla Academy book fair, and the celebration of Pahela Baisakh at the Ramna Batamul. They are all temporary in character and exist for a certain period. But as spontaneous civic spaces, they add new dimensions to our urban culture, and social life. Besides, the mass gathering at the TSC and the cultural functions at the Shahid Minar within the campus of the Dhaka University are manifestations of our patriotic zeal and cultural heritage, which impart to this area a unique signifi-

The same symbolism stands for Sangsad Bhaban Plaza and Crescent Lake premises. The tranquility of water, surrounding greenery and verdure, red brick steps for sitting amid less noise on the road - all to-

views, values and attitudes.

Five killed, 16 hurt

in road accidents

spaces. It may be emphasised that the element of security is an important factor in the environment of the civic spaces. Unfortunately, this element is, more or less, wanting in some of our civic spaces for example, in Ramna Park and Suhrawardy Uddyan, where the presence of antisocial elements is reported. This situation undermines the popularity of such places. Another important point is that there are tremendous possibilities for development and improvement of attraction of the existing lakes, like Crescent Lake, Ramna Lake, Gulshan Lake and Dhanmondi Lake. which attract hundreds of visi-

There is a project for shifting the Dhaka Central Jail to a more spacious site near

and Tikkapara caught fire at around 5:15 pm on Thursday One person was electrocuted during the fire and some 10

> During a visit to the area yesterday, the slum dwellers were found busy clearing the debris and preparing a list of the victims of the incident.

built with bamboo and corruraised on the government

that the land mainly belonged to the government. Mostafa. of the slums, said, no one came to them claiming ownership of the land.

Another slum dweller, Mohammad Siddique, is in pessession' of the land where he had built 10 shanties and rented those out. Siddique, who mainly depended on the money collected as rent, did not rule out the possibility that it was a case of arson.

residents, while preparing to spend the night under the open sky, claimed that government officials had asked

them to send details of the fire victims. Many had taken shelter with their relatives in the city, said some residents. The rest

rying knives and lathis when they reached the spot Thurs-

affected slums

Awamt League president Sheikh Hasina vesterday itsited the fire affected slums of Tikkapara and Biflee Mahalla at Shyamali in Mahammadpur thana, reports UNB.

Hasina went round the af-

Sonargaon Hotel

Sacked employees demand judicial inquiry into Jan 30 incident The terminated employees

of the five-star Sonargaon Hotel at a press conference yesterday denied the allegation against them of attacking the management personnel on January 30, reports UNB. The employees, who

claimed to be in the leadership of the Sonargaon Hotel Sramik Karmachari Union even after the formation of an ad-hoc committee, blamed the management for creating unrest in the hotel and demanded a judicial enquiry into the inci-

Fifteen employees were terminated and 43 suspended following the January 30 incident in which some management personnel were injured. Addressing the press conference at the Jatiya Press Club in the afternoon, Dewan Nasim-ur-Rahman, President of the union, also accused the management of interfering into the union politics.

He demanded judicial enquiry into the incident, withdrawal of "false cases" filed by the hotel's General Manager and also of the termination and suspension orders served on the employees.

Meanwhile, a four-member corporate team of Pan Pacific Hotel and Resort Ltd arrived in Dhaka yesterday and held a meeting with the general staff. The team will hold another meeting with the staff today.

JP demands release of political leaders

By Staff Correspondent

Jatiya Party acting secretary general Shamim Al Mamun yesterday called upon the party leaders and workers to mobilise the people against this "illegal" government through holding rallies and processions across the country.

In a statement, he also demanded immediate release of the national leaders including JP secretary general Anwar Hossain Monfu, presidium member Barrister Moudud Ahmed, Awami League leaders Tofael Ahmed, Mohammad Nasim and Mayor of Chittagong City Corporation ABM Mohiuddin Chowdhury.

The Jatiya Party will hold processions and rallies in different thanas and districts everyday till March 8 in support of the Opposition's next pro-

Samim also called upon the party workers to observe 'mourning day' today to condole the deaths of opposition activists during anti-government agitation throughout the

country recently. India ready to meet Pak challenge: Rao

NEW DELHI. Mar 1: Prime Minister P V Narasimha Rao said today that India was prepared resolutely to meet any security challenge from Pakistan, reports Reuter.

"We will not be found wanting in being able to meet the challenge of Pakistan," he told the upper house of parliament. His speech hit the keynotes which his ruling Congress

party is likely to concentrate on the campaign for a general election due by mid-year. He made no comment about the 18 million dollars bribes -

for favours scandal that has claimed seven of his ministers since January, prompting complaints from across the floor of parliament that the issue was "too hot," for him. Home Minister S B Chavan

told the house before Rao spoke that an announcement on the date of the elections. expected in April, would be made in the next two or three

Rao reiterated India's opposition to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). "This is not the way to disarmament," he said.

The Midnight File

Framework for coalition govt in Turkey tomorrow

ANKARA, Mar 1: Turkey's conservatives are closer to forming a government and will announce details of their proposed coalition at the weekend, caretaker Prime Minister Tansu Ciller told a news conference today. "We expect to announce the coalition's framework and outlines on Sunday." Cilier said after meeting Motherland Party (Anap) leader Mesut Yilmaz, reports Reuter.

Bosnia celebrates independence day

War crimes tribunal indicts Serb Gen

THE HAGUE. Netherlands, Mar 1: An international tribunal Friday indicted a Bosnian Serb general for crimes against humanity and war crimes including the Bosnian Serb shelling of Sarajevo, reports

The general is now one of two jailed suspects to face indictment by the tribunal, set up to try suspected war criminals in the 3 1/2-year-old Bosnia conflict. The court indicted the gen-

eral for his role in helping his army shell "civilian targets during the Bosnian Serb siege of Sarajevo between May 1992 and December 1995." Chief **Prosecutor Richard Goldstone**

The tribunal has indicted 53 suspects and has two in custody. The indictment allows the tribunal to keep holding

Djukic was arrested Jan. 30 after making a wrong turn into a Muslim-held Sarajevo suburb. As a senior aide to Bosnian Serb army chief Gen. Ratko Mladic, he is considered a potential gold mine of information for prosecutors.

Asked if he had anything to say about the indictment. Djukic said during a court hearing that he "did not wish to speak any further.

He told the tribunal Wednesday that he would answer no questions. On Wednesday Djukic's

lawyers had demanded the general's immediate release. claiming his arrest and detention were illegal. Tribunal judges turned the appeal down and Goldstone asked to have Djukic held an extra month.

Reuter adds: Bosnia celebrated independence day today for the first time in peace instead of war thanks to a treaty that has ended the blockade of the capital.

Although Bosnia may not look like the independent state envisaged before war broke out four years ago: the Dayton accords signed in December preserve Sarajevo as an undivided city and recognise the country's borders inside a loose union.

Gold smuggling: 40000 Serbs flee Arrested Pak national remanded

By Staff Correspondent A Pakistani national arrested with almost five kilograms of gold at Zia International Airport Wednesday has been put on a three-day police remand for interrogation at Cantonment Thana, police said yesterday.

According to police. Mohammad Ashraf Ali, 30, a passenger of an Emirates flight from Dubai, was intercepted by Customs officials at ZIA, and later recovered gold bars worth Taka 20 lakh on his person and in his luggage. He will be produced before

> Ctg clash From Page 1

the court tomorrow.

Rahmatganj. Momin Road and other places. They were seen opening fire at random.

A timber shop owned by BNP supporter caught on fire at Bahaddarhat area today However, local people rushed there and extinguished the fire. In most areas of the city.

there were hardly any patrol by the members of the law enforcing agencies although the situation worsened since afternoon. A senior police official how-

ever, claimed that security measures have been further tightened with police reinforcement reaching from Dhaka Requesting anonymity, he

said the police had been instructed to shoot anyone seen committing any violent act in

the city. Additional IG of Police S Kabir has been sent from Dhaka to review the situation here. Meanwhile, the city Awami

League today called off the indefinite hartal call and said it will end at 6 pm tomorrow. AL sources said that Mayor Mohiuddin had sent a message from jail urging party colleagues to relax the indefinite hartal in order to reduce peoples' sufferings.

Mohfuddin has been refused division by the jail authorities in Comilla today, the AL sources Former mayor and Jatiya

Party leader Mahmudul Islam Chowdhury in a statement resented arrest of Mohiuddin and urged the authorities to grant him division as the status of a Mayor equals that of a State Minister. The Opposition parties

brought out separate processions and held rallies in the city demanding release of the Mayor. Meanwhile, BNP brought out

procession in the city protesting "terrorism in the name of demanding release of the Mayor." The BNP has also announced holding of a raily in the city Sunday.

Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) Chittagong unit president Nazimur Rahman, in a press. conference, said that people were not supporting the demand of the release of Mohiuddin.

"A hired gang of Mohiuddin's terrorists have unleashed terror in the city in the name of the demand for his release and we shall resist it with the help of the people," he said. The port remained inopera-

tive while all shops and offices remained closed. As supply of essentials could

not reach the city for the last two days, prices have increased During a three-hour relax-

ation of hartal for the Jumma prayers, people were seen thronging to the markets to buy essentials in haste. Some rickshaws also come out during this

Many people have reportedly

Sarajevo suburbs GENEVA, Mar 1: The Uni-

ted Nations refugee agency said today it would do all it could to avert another exodus of Serbs from two major suburbs of Sarajevo still to come under the control of Bosnia's Muslim-Croat federation, .reports Reuter. Citing Bosnian Serb figures,

a UN High Commissioner for Refugees spokesman said 40,000 of a total 70,000 Serbs had already fled Serb suburbs of the Bosnian capital, leaving three of the suburbs largely

Spokesman Ron Redmond said the UNHCR was therefore concentrating on two large suburbs. !lidza and Grbavica, which will come under, the control of the Muslim-Croat federation in the coming weeks and where thousands of Serbs remain.

"We're going to do everything in our power to try to convince people that they can stay, that we're going to be there with them, that the international police task force will be there with them, Redmond told a news briefing.

"There's an IFOR (military) presence, the world is watching. We want them to stay."

Stop arresting leaders, WP urges govt The Workers Party of

Bangladesh vesterday called upon the government to restore normal political atmosphere by giving up the path of confrontation, including arrest and harassment of political leaders and workers, reports UNB.

A statement of the party's standing committee said the result of the February 15 polls must be cancelled to pave way for holding "free and fair elections under a neutral caretaker government"

In the statement, the Worker's Party also demanded release of Chittagong City Mayor ABM Mohiuddin Chowdhury and expressed solidarity with the struggle of the people of Chittagong.

BGMEA polls: From Page 1

Saveedul Islam of the Con-

corde Garments Limited: Anisul Hug of the Mohammadi Apparels Ltd: Al-Haj Habibur Rahman of the Pandemic Fashion Ltd: S U Haider of the Radiant Garments Ltd; Benajir Ahmed of the Raymond Garments Ltd; Mohammad Uzair Afial of the Tuzimrah Company Ltd: Muhammad Akbar Khan o the Fija Fashions Apparels Ltd: Khalifur Rahman of the KDS Garment Industries Ltd; and Lutfee M Ayub of the Sunflower Garments Ltd.

The Forum won two executive committee seats last year.

City BNP From Page 1

on Thursday at Kathalbagan

and they also threw bombs at the residences of BNP workers near Hazaribagh Park Area Speakers at the meeting condemned the attack and

demanded legal actions against the terrorists. Those who attended the meeting included Jubo Dal president Mirza Abbas MP.

General Secretary of city BNP Salahuddin Ahmed. MP. DUCSU VP Amanullah Aman. SA Khaleque, president, Dhaka City Chhatra Dal Nasiruddin Pintu. Meanwhile, an emergency meeting of the Dhaka City BNP

will be held today at 6 pm Mir Sawkat Ali will preside over the meeting to be held at the central office of the party

left for their village homes fearing worsening of the overall situation here

US actor and director Clint Eastwood (L) smiles as he is given the American Film Institute's Life Achievement Award from last year's recipient, filmmaker Steven Spielberg (R) on-Thursday in Beverly Hills, California. - AFP/UNB photo

Editor: Mahfuz Anam

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Dhaka Union of Journalists . "tariff-war" by offering huge

gether attract people. Such civic spaces, be they

designed or spontaneous, conceive the value and emotion of our urban people. They reflect the image and quality of our cimance social interaction and consolidate our cultural and traditional homogeneity. It is felt that the more people find out civic spaces, the more interaction would take place. leading to greater exchange of

The above are some of the points raised in a paper presented at a seminar held under the auspices of the Department of Architecture, BUET in

In this context, it may be pertinent to underscore certain aspects of the city's civic

The injured were admitted

A case was filed with Sathia

Gorbachev likely

to run for

presidency

Soviet leader Mikhail Gor-

bachev said today he hoped to

rally Russia's democratic

forces in challenging Boris

Yeltsin next June for the

making the widely expected

official announcement that he

would seek a return to the

centre of the political stage

the collapse of the Soviet

ference that he would an-

the upcoming presidential

elections at a later" stage and

that he was satisfied for the

moment with making a " Polit-

"I believe that to have to

choose only between Boris

Yeltsin and Sennady Zyuganov

would be the worst (situation)

possible," he declared. "It is

necessary to do everything

possible to avoid having to

dent indicated Wednesday to

AFP that he was "100 per cent

sure" that he would stand

clared his intention to seek a

further term. Yeltsin is trailing

in opinion polls well behind

Zyuganov, leaders of the reju-

US airline suspends

operation in India

Air of the United States an-

nounced today that it was sus-

pending its operations in India

amid charges of starting a tar-

iff-war with rivals in the coun-

said the airline would suspend

its services to Bombay front

the US starting March 10 say-

ing its operations "have be-

operating to India from New

York and other US cities in

April 1994, shut down its

boeing services to New Delhi

last year triggering angry

protests by its retrenched

carrier, Air India, and several

cused Tower Air of starting a

discounts to lure away poten-

tial international travellers

last year ended the rivairies

between Tower Air and its

competitors by formulating an

uniform fare-table for interna-

after making a mess in India."

an Air India official said of the

controversial airline which op-

erated two aircraft twice a

week from Bombay to the

"Tower Air is leaving here

Indian aviation authorities

· other foreign airlines have ac-

India's state-owned flag

The airline, which began

A spokesman of Tower Air

try, reports AFP.

come uneconomical."

employees here.

from other carriers.

tional travel from India.

United States.

NEW DELHI, Mar 1: Tower

venated Communist Party.

. against Yeltsin, who has de-

The former Soviet presi-

ical declaration.

make that choice.'

nounce his official candidacy in

Union in December 1991.

from which he was forced with

Gorbachev told a news con-

However, he fell short of

presidency, reports AFP.

MOSCOW, Mar 1: Former

to Pabna Sadar Hospital. Of

them, Masud 25, Lutfar Rah-

man.32. Moinuddin.30, Hafi-

zur Rahman, 15, and Sahriful

20, were in critical condition.

tors everyday.

Shafipur in Gazipur district. When that project is implemented, quite a big area in the heart of Dhaka will be available. It is for the town planners to consider whether, instead of utilizing the land for commeror residential complex which will further add to the existing congestion, the area could be used for a properly designed eivic space with ancillary facilities. Above all, it is felt that in

the interest of city dwellers, the prime need is to ensure adoption of appropriate measures to keep the existing civic spaces of the city free from encroachments at any kind and also to remain vigilant that the atmosphere in these areas is not vitiated in any

5 injured in Hazaribagh clash

By Staff Correspondent Several gunshots were fired and cocktails hurled when an unidentified group of people set ablaze a canopy erected by Awami League activists a Hazaribagh in the city yester day afternoon.

At least five people were injured in the ensuing clash. A rickshawpuller identified as Kamal, 24, was admitted to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) with bullet injuries, hospital sources said. The clash began between

the supporters of the AL and

the attackers near the

Hazaribagh park at around 4:30

pm. police sources added.

The local AL activists had or-

ganised a rally there, the sources added. However, Lalbagh police said that they did not receive any complaint in this regard while none was arrested in this connection till last night.

World Cup

From Page 1

But, for a change. Tendulkar will have a steady partner at the other end with Sanjay Manjrekar proving his abili-

ties against the Aussies. Anil Kumble, disappointing in his side's last game, and a fast-improving Venkateah Prasad will carry the torch in the bowling department along with Javagal Srinath.

· India's limited bowling strength, however, may not be enough to stop a rampaging

Lankan batting side. They have seven frontline batsmen in their ranks, all impatient to get some runs on the board. Aravinda de Silva and Asanka Gurusinha made their intentions clear when they ran riot with the bat against Zimbabwe in their only other match of the World Cup. And add to their prowess the tremendous hitting abilities of

pinch-hitter. Romesh Kaluwitharana. However, Sri Lanka's bowling has failed to impress in recent times. Chaminda Vaas the young pacer — looking the only bowler with any kind of bite to his deliveries. But controversial off-spinner Muttiah Muralitharan will look to find his lost form back in leading

'his side to victory. Hawala scam

From Page 1 state run media for electoral campaigns in a bid to reform the corrupt voting system and prevent violence and fraud.

Agarwal's charge was denied by members of the ruling Congress (I) party. But Jaipal Reddy, a leader of the centrist Janata Dal said the programmes were image-building exercise," glorifying Rao.

The opposition uproar ended when Speaker Najma Heptullah, a Congress member, said she could not allow 'unsubstantiated' charges to be discussed in Parliament.

Biswa Ijtema From Page 1 C I sheet-covered camps have been built for the foreigners at the congregation. Adequate steps have been taken for their security, police

Bangladesh Railway arranged special trains and BRTC arranged bus service for the devotees. All inter-city trains passing through Tongi will halt at the station till Monday.

The Biswa Ijtema was first

held at Pagar, near Tongi, in

Water pipes were brunt and 15.000 people the motor of the power pump was also partially damaged by a Two slums - Bizli Mahallah mob, he alleged. "If it was a spontaneous reaction to the delay of the fire fighters, as some people had claimed, why were they (mob) Editorial on page 4 equipped to assault our people," asked a fireman, requestfire fighters were assaulted. Some witnesses claimed that cocktails were hurled at the fire brigade vehicles. This was also confirmed by fire The shanties at the slums fighters. The Relief Minister along gated iron sheets were mainly with local MP elect Khandokel Mahbubuddin Ahmed also visowned waterlogged marshland. ited the spot yesterday and as-Mohammad Mostafa, residsured the fire victim of goving there for 19 years, said ernment aid, said residents. Sad story of a occupying two sharities in one fire victim By Staff Correspondent

Awami League president Sheikh Hasina consoling a

victim during her visit to fire affected slums at

Mohammadpur fire

an act of sabotage?

By Staff Correspondent

- Star photo

day evening. Some also created

obstacles when fire fighters

were busy extinguishing the

hammadpur fire station were

reportedly assaulted and in-

jured. One of them claimed

that a group of people carrying

knives and Chinese axe did not

allow him to operate their

Jalal Khan had many a times

the years in Thursday's devas-

with hopes that I may recover

something I had lost," he said.

"But the only thing I could find

was my daughter's gold ring."

other things which the neigh-

bourhood volunteers had res-

cued from the fire, he said. "I

suspect some people may have

taken away whatever they

Jalal is grateful that his two

"I have dug out the ashes

But he could not find many

tating fire at Mohammadpur.

Some fire fighters of Mo-

Mohammadpur in the city vesterday.

The fire that devastated

two slums at Mohammadour in

the city on Thursday night

have been an act of sabotage

by a group of people to get

hold of the area, many rest-

gally by another group of peo-

ple on a nearly one square km

area, according to the resi-

The fire affected some

The slums were set up file-

dents of the area suspect.

The Parily Star

carried news items and photographs of fire incidents. But he did not know that one day he himself would become a fire victim. A pron-of The Daily Star reporting section. Jalai lost ev-Lal Miah, and some other erything he had earned over

were found preparing to raise some sort of structures. Some others, who did not want to be named, claimed that they had seen people car-

Hasina visits

fected area, talked to the fire victims and expressed her sympathy to them. She demanded immediate relief for the affected people.

children and wife escaped the devastating fire unharmed. "It was three hours after the fire when I got the news." he recalled. "I had to rush then and there from The Daily Star office extremely worried. He said that his wife was sleeping with the children when the fire broke out at 5:15 pm. "She woke up feeling the heat of the fire and saw fire all around and promptly rushed

found worth.

out with the children," he said. Jalal lost Tk 13,000 cash in savings and goods worth over Tk 40.000 in the fire.

Comforted and encouraged by colleagues and relatives. dalal now looks forward to resilming his life from scratch.