

Dhaka Day by Day

Illusive Addresses

by Ayesha Fariha

Take one look around Dhaka, and you will see how much we take illiteracy for granted. We assume that people cannot read or write, that they are basically street smart, and that they will find their way around by taking people who know their own way around, or by asking those who pass by. Think about the number of times you have given someone directions and said "If you cannot find it, just ask someone and they will show you the way". The directions that you give prior to this resemble something like this: "Go down X road, take a right opposite the video store that has a blue sign, and then when you come to a field look to your left, you will see a little lane, go down the lane, and opposite the white house with a greyish tint, you will see a red-bricked house with a white wall and a black gate and that is my house." You add to the directions by saying "the ex-minister of so and so lives beside us, so if you cannot find our house ask people where the ex-minister lives, and our house is right beside his." I have rarely come across anyone who said, "Come over, I live in House 312, Road 77, Gulshan".

This lengthy introduction is to drive home the message that we need proper signs all over Dhaka city. We need to simplify our lives so that we do not need to look out for video

stores with blue signs or ex-ministers' houses. We should be able to find houses and offices and shops on our own.

I conducted a market survey a few months ago, and it involved approaching a number of NGO's and Development organisations in Dhanmondi, Mirpur and Mohammadpur. It seemed like an easy task, but sometimes it would take me upto an hour to find one office. I would have the addresses, but if the roads do not have any signs, how could I know where I was? Worse, the roads are not numbered according to their locations. For example, it is quite possible to have Rd 23 after Rd 15. If I was supposed to be on Road 16, and I was on Road 15, I would, with great difficulty, stumble onto Rd 23, 29, 87 etc, and later I would find that Rd 16 is actually a good three miles away.

All this hassle, and I am someone who actually lived in Dhaka all her life.

I can just imagine what a trial it is for someone who has just moved here — Bangalee or a foreigner. There are many new areas now, and that means new roads. As the population increases and Dhaka becomes more crowded, it will become more and more frustrating to go from one place to another without a clue to where exactly we are headed.



Such road signs are few and far between.

— Star photo

Seminar told

Light engineering industries make valuable contributions to GDP

Small and light engineering industries provide employment to a large number of people, help develop industries and make valuable contributions to the GDP, speakers said at a seminar in the city yesterday, reports BSS.

They said healthy development of small and medium enterprises needs three things — favourable financial and fiscal policies, appropriate institutional support and absorptive capacities of the enterprises. Both industrialised and the newly industrialised countries have given due attention to these factors, they said.

Jointly organised by Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industries (DCCI) and German Federation of Small Business (ZDH), the two-day seminar on "institutional support for export oriented light engineering, small and medium enterprises," was participated by 45 owners of small and light industries in the city.

Vice-chancellor of Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET) Prof M Shahjahan inaugurated the seminar as the chief guest.

DCCI president Ali Hossain, resident representative of German Federation of Small Business (ZDH) and Technoeg Asia (TA), Singapore, M Azizur Rahman and DCCI senior vice president Fazle R M Hasan also spoke at the inaugural function.

Prof Shahjahan said BUET would give all-out support for the healthy development of small and medium enterprises including light engineering industries located at Dholakhal and Zingra.

The DCCI president said the seminar would benefit the small and light engineering industrialists.

Pointing out five main problems being faced by the entrepreneurs, the DCCI president said the government

should come forward to resolve the problems in the greater national interest.

The problems are: political instability, law and order situation, bureaucratic red-tape failure of taking right decision on time, administrative complicity by banks and taxes departments.

He said Bangladesh exports 0.05 per cent of total world export market amounting to 204 crore US dollars. World's total export is 368,700 crore US dollars.

Merrill calls on Abdur Razzak

US Ambassador to Bangladesh David N Merrill called on Water Resources Minister Abdur Razzak at his Secretariat office yesterday, reports UNB.

They discussed matters relating to mutual interest and exchanged views on the water, resources and flood management of Bangladesh during the meeting.

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Metropolitan



Students ousted from their dormitory rooms reportedly by rivals at the Sir Salimullah Medical College staged a sit-in in front of the Jatiya Press Club in the city yesterday.

— Star photo

What's on today . . .

Economic Reporters' Forum: The forum has organised a discussion meeting on "Economic Priorities of the New Government." Finance Minister S A M S Kibria will attend the discussion as chief guest. Venue: Jatiya Press Club, VIP Lounge. Time: 4:00 pm.

Rotary Club of Dhaka New City: The regular weekly meeting of the club will be held. Venue: Sonargaon hotel. Time: 5:30 pm.

DU English Deptt memorial meet: The English Department of Dhaka University will hold a meeting to condole the death of Professor Shamsuddoha. Venue: DU TSC seminar room. Time: 11 am.

Contaminated tap water reported in Azimpur

By Staff Correspondent

Tap water in Azimpur's New Paltan Lane is posing health hazard to hundreds of people as it has begun to emit foul stench and waste matter, residents there complained.

It is widely suspected that the main water line is leaking somewhere and sewerage is entering the water supply.

Some residents said that the stench and the waste matter have been present in their tap water for a long time and despite several complaints to the Dhaka WASA, nothing has been done to solve the problem.

"They (WASA) came to the area and repaired some pipes a month ago but waste matter and the foul stench are still present," said Manjur Morshed, a resident, showing his own water reservoir with dirty

water from the tap. Other residents told this correspondent that many well-to-do families in the area brought water from other parts of the city for their daily requirement.

At the local mosque, some elderly people said that they could not use the tap water in its present state.

When contacted, an official of the Dhaka WASA said that they received reports of such contamination from the area a month ago and repairs were immediately made to the lines.

"It might take us a day or two to detect the point of contamination but let me assure you, such matter receives utmost priority and repairs will be done immediately," the official said.

Removal of Bangabandhu's portrait condemned

By Staff Correspondent

More socio cultural organisations yesterday condemned the removal of the portrait of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman from the cabinet room of the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban Saturday.

Protesting the incident, 433 lawyers of Bangladesh Supreme Court in a joint statement said that it reflected the mean mindedness and revengeful attitudes of the persons at whose behest the portrait was taken down.

They said, "We had expected that all political parties would try their best to practice healthy politics for consolidating democracy and development of the country. But the removal of Sheikh Mujib's portrait from the cabinet room has created resentment among the people."

The lawyers of the Supreme Court also demanded arrest and punishment of those responsible for such activities.

Prominent lawyers who signed the statement include Advocate SR Pal, Advocate Shamsul Huq Chowdhury, Barrister Amirul Islam, Barrister KS Nabi, Dr Zahir, Advocate Shudhansu Shekhar Halder, Advocate Abdul Aziz, A BM

Rahman and Advocate Fazle Rabby.

Bangladesh Ajibji Sammoy Parishad president Shamsul Huq Chowdhury and general secretary Mezbah Uddin also condemned the action in a separate statement.

Azad Products Jatra Forum in a meeting yesterday protested the removal of Sheikh Mujib's portrait from the cabinet room.

Chief adviser to Bangladesh Mijibnagar Karmachari Sangsad Barrister A Hasib, A Latif Khan, chairman, executive committee of the Sangsad and general secretary S M Jahangir Alam in a joint statement yesterday condemned the removal of the portrait of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman from the cabinet room.

The lawyers of the Supreme Court also demanded arrest and punishment of those responsible for such activities.

The prize-giving ceremony for the Poster Contest '96, sponsored by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) will be held at the Shishu Academy auditorium on 5 pm today reports UNB.

Prize-giving ceremony



This car was damaged when HSC examinees, expelled for cheating, went on a rampage outside the Dhaka College yesterday.

— Star photo

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