

Adulteration goes unabated

Those food sellers violating food standards get away with their misdeeds owing to the very small fines

CITY CORRESPONDENT

Despite supervision by Dhaka City Corporation (DCC), the adulterated food scenario in the city has not improved at all, according to DCC health department sources.

Till July 11 this year, DCC has filed about 900 cases against unscrupulous food sellers. The food items collected in June and tested at DCC's testing laboratory revealed that 69.78 per cent of its food samples from the city's markets were adulterated.

"Our food inspectors file cases against those who violate the food standards. But the violators in fact get away with their misdeeds owing to the very small size of the fines," said a source at the health department of DCC.

As part of a vigorous campaign against impure food items, the health department of DCC initiated a drive against fast food shops.

"In New Market, I haven't found any fast food shops which sell food items commensurate with the standard. It is unfortunate that some of the shops do not even allow us to enter and check their items," said Food and Sanitation Officer of the DCC Makhan Lal Howlader.

"Very soon, we will go to the more

famous fast food shops in the city and test their items," said Makhan Lal Howlader.

On a tip off, the food inspectors found that two famous sweet shops Bonoful and Alauddin are selling sweet items under par. The Bonoful factory at South Jatrabari produces sweet items below the standard prescribed by DCC.

The factory of Alauddin Sweetmeat at Naziuddin Road is also failing to meet hygiene and other standards.

"On July 2 and July 20, we filed cases against Alauddin Sweetmeat and Bonoful for violation of standards. No other sweetmeat shops in the city appear to be selling quality items. In June, we collected 17 items from various sweetmeat shops but found them all adulterated," said Makhan Lal Howlader.

"Another frustrating aspect is that some of the houses at Badamtoli and Moulvi Bazar in old Dhaka are used as ripening grounds for the fruits. Dishonest fruit sellers are using carbide to ripen them artificially," said Makhan Lal Howlader.

"If the DCC ordinances on adulterated food are not amended then it will not be possible to wipe out adulteration. For adulterated food items, we need stringent punishments," said a high official of the DCC on condition of anonymity.



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Police 'Help Line' waiting to help

BISHAWJIT DAS

The Help Line that Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) launched on July 23 for crisis intervention and crime prevention is yet to have regular calls from city people.

Since its inception with one traffic sergeant on a motor-bike, one sub-inspector and two constables in a patrol car and one doctor and two nurses in an ambulance, Help Line responded to only four calls until yesterday.

The first shift from 6:00am to 2:00pm last Monday at the police control room -- a case in point -- did not get any call. No call was made the day before either.

But Help Line is ready at all times to swing into action, with each of its three teams working an eight-hour shift.

Anyone needing help or having information about accident or crime can call the police control room at 999 by T&T telephone. Help Line will race to the caller to assist within the shortest possible time.

"We can reach any spot in the city in 10 to 45 minutes," said the assistant commissioner at the police control room, Akram. "As we have to act fast, traffic police will clear roads on our way," he said.

The teams will not only help the injured or victims but also arrest criminals, said DMP Commissioner Ashraf Huda earlier.

The DMP commissioner also said Help Line would attend to the people in distress until policemen from the nearby police station or doctors arrive. The team will go back to the police control room and get ready for the next call.

Sub-Inspector Mahub led the team on the first call from Banani at 1:55am on July 23. His team rescued two persons, whose rickshaw-van was hit by a car on the way to Uttara. By the time the team took the two to Dhaka Medical College Hospital, one of them died on the way.

Diminishing demand for post office boxes



Both letter boxes and post-office boxes are suffering from the impact of electronic media.

SYED TASHFIN

Post-office boxes have been a reliable medium of exchange for almost all institutions, offices, firms and so on up to the last decade, where letters, parcels, and applications have been received. But recently, the demand for post-office boxes has dimin-

ished considerably. In the past, all post-office boxes were to be found at the General Post Office at Motijheel. Later, the administration decided on increasing this provision to other areas and there are, currently at least, seven other post-offices with such facilities. The usual procedure for a firm or institution is to apply

to the Post Master General for a post-office box. The application was looked upon, a sound inquiry was made and once approved an allocation was made to that institution, under given terms and for an annual fee of Tk.300. Post-office bags were also available at an annual fee of Tk. 250 if the boxes were all filled up. Post-office boxes are

accessible with unique cards provided to the firm and have always proved to be secure in the past.

Now, however, with the internet and email service, they appear to be growing obsolete.

"The General Post Office has 3306 post-office boxes altogether but even last year, there were 1108 which were 'empty'," said Kabiruddin Akhand, the Senior Grade Postal Operator of the General Post Office.

While this correspondent was interviewing Akhand, a member of the public showed up and tried to find out information about a certain post-office box owner, which is otherwise confidential. How-

CLARIFICATION

In last issue's report "Stretching playtime for children," Mahtabur Rahman Bulbul was mistakenly referred to as Federation Secretary instead of National Basketball Coach. The Basketball Federation Secretary is Selim Choudhury. Also Niaze Mousa's name was printed as Mohammad Newaz. We regret these mistakes.

Who are the genuine beggars?

In a city full of beggars, it's not always easy to tell the genuine from the 'fake'

CITY CORRESPONDENT

There's a tap, tap, tap on the car window. You look. Surprise! It's a beggar. Do you reach for your wallet or lock your door?

Perhaps you take a moment to consider. Is it a woman with a baby? A child leading a blind man? A legless pauper who nevertheless can afford a hand-powered, cycle-driven begging-machine? Is it someone who looks like they have just run out of money at a store and stepped to the curb for some quick money?

It's hard to decide, isn't it? You never know. Is it even safe to give money to the crippled? They have no choice besides starvation, right?

But then how do you decide if they are 'genuine cripples' or have been disfigured at birth by ruthless gangs who are the ones to ultimately gain from your generous Tk2 donation?

Other 'beggars' actually get rich through 'professional begging', earning enough to buy land back in their villages and ruining people's trust in all beggars - even the genuine.

Then again there are those - usually the idle rich - who commonly believe that it's easy for an illiterate, malnourished, hygiene- and clothing-deprived person to find a job. Their situation is just a result of laziness.

This view, however, is sometimes supported by those beggars that just don't seem to be trying hard enough. Those that beg with an air of being at the dinner table and asking for the salt? And always amusing, though slightly disturbing, are the kids who switch from frolicking to begging like it is a game of tag. They can switch on that pleading droning whine at the drop of a hat.

The real tragedy, in fact, is human nature. We become inured to the sight of suffering and the plight of the poor. We have little choice if we want to remain sane in a city so full of human misery.

And yet, how depressing it is when even the most virtuous among us become so detached that a fellow human, who still somehow manages to move us with his crying and pleading, is nonetheless left empty-handed simply because he didn't come round to our side of the car.

What makes up for such tragic instances, perhaps, are the moments when humanity is confronted by humanity. When rich and poor meet eye to eye. When a well-heeled professional on urgent city business is suddenly stopped in his tracks by a little girl in rags, who can barely reach the car window, but who manages to set herself apart from other beggars by use of a simple smile. No need for words, no usual whitening routine, her bright eyes and sincere

expression makes the other realise that he is facing another human being, a fellow creation of the Creator.

In a city of millions that daily reduces its inhabitants to insignificant specks, such moments of significance are impossible to quantify.

So next time a beggar taps on your window, it might just be worth your while to take a second look.



Do we encourage the inhuman gangs who disfigure young children by giving money to cripp-

crisistelephone numbers

COURIER SERVICES

International
Air Borne Express- 9561371, 9561372, 9550724
Air Couriers Int'l (BD) Ltd.- 8815970
Aramex International Courier- 9558003, 9559582, 9565075
Airspeed Express- 9563494
Asian Courier Services Ltd.- 8313543
Baishakhi Courier Service- 9558606
Banmgladesh Express Co. Ltd.- 9565114
Bangladesh Courier Service- 9563989
Bengal Express- 9560642, 9552666
Bangladesh Int'l Courier- 953636
Continental Service Ltd.- 9552948, 9558425
DHL Worldwide Express- 9881703-7, 9886305-9, 9882057
Enem Express- 9330699
Fedex Bangladesh Express Co. Ltd.- 9565114
Modhuban Courier Service-

9550884
Overseas Courier Service- 9352431, 8321169
Pacific Courier- 9568446
Reliance Express Service- 9558515, 7110249
Sky International Service- 9660442
SkyNet world Wide Express- 9558062, 9560258, 7114787, 7113184
TNT Express- 9566662, 9558239, 8618155
Union Courier Service- 9341722
United Parcel Service Air alliance Ltd.- 8826429, 8810223
National
Asian courier Service Ltd.- 8313543
BAE- 9884851
Central Courier Service- 9881118
Confidence Courier Service Ltd.- 9567036
Chisty Courier- 7110177-9, 7100842-4
Cosmopol Services- 9552793, 9557975

Dhaka Courier Services- 7236222
Dolphin Courier- 9558802
Dreamland Courier Service- 9550326, 9566975
Pioneer Courier Services- 9561727, 9569759
Probashi Courier Services- 9346359
Rainbow Express Parcel Services Ltd.- 8322773, 8315703
Reliance Express Services- 9558515, 7110249
Sundaban Courier Services- 9551984, 9556189, 9551656
Sunrise Courier Services- 9568751

TIPS
Do not forget to bring your raincoat, and To avoid traffic jams, follow the traffic rules.

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
British Council- 8618867-8, 8618905-7
Community Development Library- 8113769, 8113604
Goethe Institute Int'l- Dhaka- 9126525-6
Indian Information Centre & Cultural Library- 8615096
The Russian Cultural Centre- 9116314, 9118531, 9118314
Drk Photo Gallery- 9120125, 8112954, 8123412

HEALTH

Hospitals
Heart
National Institute of Cardio Vascular Diseases (NICVD), - 9130800, 9122560-59
Burn
Dhaka Medical College Hospital Dhaka Unit-8626812-6
Cancer
National Cancer Institute-8014914, 8826561-65
Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University-8612550-4, 861455-9
Diabetes
Diabetic Research Hospital (BIRDEM)- 9661551-5, 8616641-50
Mother & Child Care
Shishu Hospital- 9119119, 8116061-62

Azimpur Mother & Child Health Training Institute- 8624827, 8624980
Eye
Islamia Eye Hospital-9110794, 9119315
National Eye Hospital- 8117202, 8114807
Dental
Dental College -9002035
Orthopaedics
National Orthopaedics (Pangu) Hospital- 9114075, 9112150
General
Dhaka Medical College Hospital- 8626812-6
Rushmono General Hospital- 8317819
Holy Family Hospital- 83111731-25
Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University Hospital- 8612550-4, 8614545-9

Bangladesh Medical College & Hospital- 8115443, 9118202,
Shamarita Hospital- 9131901
Suhrawardy Hospital -- 9130800, 9122560-69
Salimullah Medical Collage Hospital -- 7310061-4, 7319002-6
Cholera Research Hospital (ICDRB)- 8811751-60
Monowra Hospital 8319802, 8318135
Blood Bank
Red Crescent Centre- 9116563
Sandhani (DMCH)- 8624040
Sandhani (SMCH)- 7310061, 7310061, 7319022
Dhaka Medical Collage Hospital- 8626812-9
Eye Bank
Sandhani International Eye Bank- 8614040
Ambulance Service- Fire Service & Civil Defence Ambulance 9555555, 9556666-7,
9567734, Fire Services Siddique Bazar (HQ) 9556667,
Mohammadpur 9112078, Khilgaon 7218329, Mirpur 9001055, Tongi 9801070, Demra 7400111,
Postagola 7410771, Narayanganj 9715644, Sadarghat 7119759, Mirpur 10 Circle 9002269, 9001055, Mirpur TVG Complex 9001189, Narayanganj Port 9715365,
Hajiganj (N Ganj) 9715531, Mondalpara (N. Ganj River) 9712015, N. Gan Bander 9712095, Dhaka EPZ (Savar) 7701444, Markajul Al Islami 9127867, Holy Family Hospital 8311721-5.
Ambulances For Dead Body
Anzuman Matulid Islam (Kakrail) 9336611, Gandaria 7319808, 7318166, Al-Markajul Islam 9127867,