

SYED ZAKIR HOSSAIN  
Most buildings are vulnerable to tremors.

## No observatory yet for tremor, no logistics

SULTANA RAHMAN

Geological Survey of Bangladesh (GSB), the only organisation to monitor earthquakes in the country, does not have a Seismic Observatory Station (SOS), Accelerograph and Micro Seismic Zonation (MSZ) which are absolutely essential for a vulnerable city like Dhaka.

An earthquake of a moderate scale could spell disaster for Dhaka with hundreds of structures facing collapse. In the worst case scenario rescue workers will be unable to launch any salvage operation as they lack supporting logistics, observed the GSB. Officials of the GSB warned that up to 75 per cent of the city's population and more than 80 per cent of the buildings are extremely vulnerable to tremors which hit any time as Bangladesh is smack in the middle of South Asia's most seismic zone.

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"The ground deformation during past earthquakes indicate that the magnitudes determined by United State Geological Survey, Indian met office and other global seismic networks were lower than the actual scale. That's why we need our own station for accuracy," said Karim.

GSB director Mir Fazul Karim said that only two official seismic hazard-zoning maps are available in the country, of them one was published in 1979 and another revised in 1993. Both maps provide data on the basis of seismic efficiency, and were prepared using historic records of earthquakes. But they require further updating.

"So far no detailed maps have been

prepared as modern facilities for earthquake research and monitoring are yet to be developed in the country," Karim claimed.

According to sources, the GSB proposed a project to the ministry of Disaster Management and Relief last month to measure seismic condition of country's major cities including Dhaka and Chittagong at a cost of Tk 15 crore. It includes essential instruments to observe and monitor the earthquake.

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GSB sources said at least four SOSs in different cities including Dhaka are needed to observe and monitor the quake. The SOSs should be linked to global seismic networks. Moreover, micro seismic zonation is also essential to assess earthquake accurately.

Most buildings in Dhaka has been constructed on weak foundations and with poor filling materials without any regard to the dangers that may lie ahead. The present expansion of the city is being conducted on low-lying areas, notably on depressions and flood plains. According to experts these low-lying areas are being filled with 'loose organic sediments' such as fine-grained sand, clayey silt, organic clay, even peat and garbage.

Neither the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief, Disaster Management Bureau nor the Fire Brigade and Civil Defense have trained manpower or equipment to manage a massive disaster like an earthquake.

"Dhaka is an urban area where the minimum salvage requirement is unavailable. The city doesn't have a single crane that can lift 100 tons of debris," said a senior official of Fire Service and Civil Defense.

Experts say that Dhaka is one of the most earthquake-risk places in the region. Risks of tremor in the capital has became higher with the rising skyline as thousands of multi-storied buildings and apartments have been erected in and around the city without conforming to the safety requirements in the event of a major earthquake.

## useful telephone numbers

### COURIER SERVICES



### LIBRARY & INFO-



### OUTING



### 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  
Bamgladesh 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  
Emen Express- 9330699  
Fedex Bangladesh Express Co. Ltd- 9565114  
Modhuban Courier Service-

### 9550884

Overseas Courier Service- 9552431, 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, Cosmopolitan Services- 9552793, 9557975  
Dhaka Courier Services- 7236222

### TIPS

Do you know according to Dhaka City Corporation, you must deposit your waste at the collection site between 4pm and 10pm

### 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 Sundarban Courier Services- 9551984, 9556189, 9551656 Sunrise Courier Services- 9568751 World Runner Express Ltd. 9112068, Fax- 880-2-9112068

### Libraries, Cultural and Information Centers

Central Public Library- 8626001-4, Shishu Academy- 9564128  
Shilpkala 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  
Drik Photo Gallery- 9120125, 8112954, 8123412

### Museum and Zoo

National Museum- 8619396-9  
Open: 10 am 5 pm, Friday 3 pm- 8 pm, Thursday closed  
**Muktijuddha Jadughar-** 9559091  
Open: 10:30 am 6:30 pm, Sunday Closed  
**Bangabandhu Smiti Jadughar-** 8110046  
Open: 10 am 5 pm, Wednesday closed  
**Ahsan Manzil**  
Open: 10 am 5 pm, Friday: 3 pm - 7 pm, Thursday Closed  
**Shishu Jadughar-** 9666466  
Open: 10 am- 6 pm, Sunday Closed

### Bus No. Route

1 Gulistan-Shahbagh-Banglamotor-Farmgate-Mirpur 10, 11, 12  
2 Gulistan-Shahbagh-Banglamotor-Farmgate-Mirpur 1, 2  
3 Gulistan-Shahbagh-Farmgate-Mahakali-Airport-Azampur  
4 Shyampur-Motijheel-Shahbagh-Farmgate-Airport-Tongi  
5 Sayedabad-Kamalapur-Motijheel-Airport-Joydebpur-Gazipur  
6 A Kamalapur-Motijheel-Gulistan-Shahbagh-Farmgate-Gulshan 1, 2  
6 B Kamalapur-Motijheel-Gulistan-Maghbazar-Nabisco-Gulshan 1, 2  
6 C Motijheel Shapla chattar- Malibagh- Farmgate- Gulshan 2  
7 Sadarghat-Gulistan-Maghbazar-Nabisco-Gulshan 2  
8 Chittagong-Motijheel-Shahbagh-Farmgate-Asad Gate-Kalyanpur-Gabtoli  
9 Demra Rani mahal-Motijheel-Kalbagh-Shyamoli-Mirpur 1, 10, 11, 12  
10 Sadarghat-Gulistan-Kakrail-Malibagh-Rampura-Biswas Road-Tongi Bridge  
11 Sayedabad-Motijheel-Fakirapool-Maghbazar-Mohakali-Tongi Bridge  
11/A Sayedabad-Khilgoan-Malibagh-Rampura-Airport-Tongi Bridge  
12 Shanir Akhra-Shahbagh-Farmgate-Asadgate-Mohammedpur  
13 Motijheel-Shahbagh-New Market-Jhigatola-Shangkar-Mohammedpur  
14 Signboard -Motijheel-Shahbagh-New Market-Shyamoli-Mirpur 1, 12  
15 Chittagong Road-Motijheel-Shahbagh-Farmgate-Mirpur 12  
15 Gulistan-Maghbazar-Mohakali-Airport-Uttara-Bipole

### Starts from

Golap Shah Mazar  
Phoolbaria bus station  
Phoolbaria bus station  
Shyampur  
Sayedabad  
Kamalapur  
Kamalapur  
Motijheel Shaplachattar  
Sadarghat  
Chittagong Road  
Demra Ranimahal  
Sadarghat  
Sayedabad  
Syedabad  
Shanir Akhra  
Motijheel  
Signboard (Chittagong Road)  
Chittagong Road  
Gulistan



No new road signs will be installed until they are made 'theft proof'

### CITY CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka City Corporation (DCO) will not install new road signs until a preventive mechanism is developed to contain thefts of expensive road signs on city's recently renovated roads, DCC officials said.

The officials acknowledged that lack of proper road signs is not only confusing motorists but also causing accidents and consequent loss of lives and property.

Most thefts took place on Mirpur Road, Panthapath, Dar es Salam Road, Rokeya Sarani, Kemal Ataturk Avenue and Pragoti Sarani, where expensive repair works were carried out over the last three years under Dhaka Urban Transport Project (DUTP).

"We had installed hundreds of these road signs around the city's recently renovated roads but 90 percent of them vanished within a few days," said an engineer of DCC's Traffic Engineering Department.

Sources in the Dhaka Transport Coordination Board (DTCB) said that it was the responsibility of the DCC to install and maintain these signs.

"The signs cost the exchequer crores of taka and whenever they were stolen, the DCC should have taken measures to prevent theft," said an official of the DTCB.

DCC sources however implied the traffic department officials,

who earlier following a talk with the DCC promised to keep vigil on the road signs that were installed under a Tk 100 crore component of the DUTP, should also have borne the responsibility.

The road signs have good resale values in the markets as they are made of aluminum with reflective coat, officials said. They, however, failed to say if they had made any

attempt to make the road signs 'theft proof' like Dhaka WASA, which, in the wake of widespread theft of previous steel made slabs of the manholes, opted for concrete made slabs, making those almost impossible to steal.

In most cases increasing drug abuse in the city is responsible for the thefts, Anwar Uddin Khan, Deputy Commissioner, Traffic

North told the Daily Star adding, "Mohammedpur police have recently caught some drug addicts attempting to steal the road signs."

"We should think of installing theft proof signs on the road," he added.

"We have written to the police to keep vigil about thefts of road signs," the DC traffic said.



The Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) has shifted the 'dumping ground' for illegal rickshaws from Old Airport area to an open space behind the LGED office at Agargaon. A drive to drive out illegal rickshaws is on, said a DMP official.