

# BGMEA to launch lounge at ZIA for foreign customers

AVIK SANWAR RAHMAN

Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) is likely to launch its reception centre at Zia International Airport (ZIA) in the first week of July in an effort to attract foreign customers in the post-multi-fibre agreement (MFA) era.

"We have appealed to the civil aviation and tourism ministry for the reception centre at the airport to help foreign customers at the immigration control. We have already received a room at the airport and are trying to get another," said BGMEA Vice-President Masud Anwar Parvez.

Although the competition will increase with the phase-out of garment quotas after 2004, it will prompt customers to visit Bangla-

desh, as it is a potential supplier of readymade garments (RMG) in South Asia, he believes.

But the foreign buyers suffer hassles at the immigration control of the airport. Some buyers had to answer questions they have never thought of in other countries.

"Customs officials asked a buyer from Germany why he visited Bangladesh so often. Another European buyer was asked why he took visa from Hong Kong whereas he could have taken it from his country," Parvez said.

The BGMEA plans to post its representatives to the reception centre to relieve the buyers of these hassles.

"Many countries like Vietnam and China have come forward to give extra attention to the foreign customers. Vietnam gives red-carpet reception and China greets whoever

comes with an investment of US\$50,000," Parvez said.

"But the president and vice-president of JC Penny could not get appointment with the commerce ministry in Bangladesh," Parvez said.

JC Penny, a reputed American garment buyer, is currently importing US\$250 million in garments from India, Pakistan and Bangladesh. JC Penny imported US\$45 million in RMG from Bangladesh last year.

"JC Penny treats Bangladesh as a potential 'cut-and-sew' RMG supplier. Bangladesh's export of readymade garments is more than India, Pakistan, Thailand, Singapore, Indonesia, Malaysia and Sri Lanka's," he said.

The quota regime has bound the companies like JC Penny to import from many countries in the world. But now the companies will be able

to choose a few countries.

"JC Penny that imported RMG from 36 countries will concentrate in five countries and Bangladesh will be one. JC Penny alone will import US\$750 million by 2007 from India, Pakistan and Bangladesh," Parvez said.

Many reputed branded companies such as Levis, Wal-Mart, Wrangler and Lee are importing RMG from Bangladesh. Many companies have already opened their liaison offices in Bangladesh to intensify their trade.

"We should have one-stop business service for the buyers at our reception centre but this depends on government's interest in RMG."

The RMG sector has contributed US\$5.2 billion in 2003 and will continue to contribute in the post MFA-era, Parvez said.



SYED ZAKIR HOSSAIN

With or without a common academic calendar, life goes on as many children continue to attend school to receive knowledge they are offered.

## Common academic calendar for high schools far from reality

### Pilot scheme introduced in Chandpur

KAUSAR ISLAM AYON

A common academic calendar, scheduled to be introduced to secondary schools across the country in January, could not be implemented yet.

The proposal is designed to help secondary educational institutes maintain certain teaching standards and have all schools adopt a common academic year.

State Minister for Education ANM Ehsanul Hoque Milon introduced a pilot academic calendar to schools in his constituency of Kochua in Chandpur district to ensure equal standards of education.

"I started the calendar in my constituency on an experimental basis but it needs ministerial approval before it can be launched all over the country," he said.

"I hope we will see the same calendar in every school early next year."

Basically, secondary schools

will be asked to open the same day. Besides, other activities like examination timings, vacation schedules and annual sports and picnics will be done simultaneously.

Presently there are no rules or regulations governing how secondary schools are run. Hence many school authorities set their own timetables and invariably this leads to the syllabus not being completed on time.

"Our aim at improving the quality of education will not be successful unless we start from the grass-root level and that is why we plan for one calendar," Milon explained.

Also he identified there was a lack of accountability in secondary schools. "There also must be a monitoring cell set up within the education ministry. It will ensure that academic calendar is followed precisely and put forward suggestions to improve it."

On the other hand, educationists like Shahan Ara Begum defended their current

academic calendar as sufficient.

"Just having a common calendar won't be enough to improve standards. We need to introduce a whole range of reforms as well," she said without elaborating.

The principal of Ideal School and College said their calendar has been followed for the last 30 years without a hitch.

According to her the government will find it difficult to impose a universal calendar because of the way certain high schools manage board examinations. In most cases classes have to remain suspended while seats are arranged in the halls.

The state minister said: "We are trying to address the problem by adjusting exams with other holidays."

But Nasreen Zahan, a mother of two high school kids, has already welcomed a common calendar for all secondary schools.

"We can't plan for any excursions as my kids' schools vacation dates never coincide," she remarked.

# DCC gears up for waste management

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) has decided to form a division to strengthen institutional development in the management of about 5,000 tonnes of solid waste generated a day in the city.

A team from Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) is conducting a study to prepare a master plan on waste management and has recommended that DCC's new division will be able to utilise the components of the plan to manage waste.

The study will include household, industrial and medical wastes to chart planning on collection, transportation

and disposal of solid wastes by 2015.

The decision and plan were revealed by DCC officials and the JICA study team at a seminar on "Institutional Development for Solid Waste Management," co-organised by the DCC and JICA in a city hotel on June 16.

Habibur Rahman, DCC's chief executive officer, said that according to the

JICA study team recommendation, the proposal was sent to the Local Government Division (LGD) and the LGD has taken a firm initiative to establish the waste management division.

Dr Katsuhide Nagayama, leader of the study team, spoke briefly of the objective and areas of study, including framework, waste collection, community activities and institutional issues.

Md Abdullah, deputy chief of LGD, Naoki Hara, member in charge of JICA study team, and Professor Mujibur Rahman of the department of civil engineering, Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET) Sohel Farouque, chief conservancy officer of DCC and engineer Anwar Uddin Patwari, coordinator of solid waste management cell, also spoke.

The Tk 13.3 crore study, funded by the Japanese government, started last December and will cover an area of around 360 square kilometres under the DCC and its new urban areas. The master plan will be complete in March 2005.

A DCC team comprising engineers and officials will assist the JICA study team in preparing the master plan, which will help develop the capacity of agencies responsible for solid waste management, raise awareness of stakeholders and facilitate coordination among the DCC, NGOs and community committees.

Waste management is not well organised and it remains utilised although it has a high organic content, a speaker said.

DCC men collect only 42 percent of about 5,000 tonnes of solid waste a day, while the rest remains spattered along the streets and other places.



SYED ZAKIR HOSSAIN

## healthouting,taxicab&traintiming

### HEALTH

#### Hospitals

##### Heart

National Institute of Cardio Vascular Diseases (NICVD), - 9130800, 9122560-59

##### Burn

Dhaka Medical College Hospital Burn 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, Shamaria Hospital- 9131901

Suhrawardy Hospital -- 9130800, 9122560-69

##### Blood Bank

Red Crescent Centre- 9116563  
Sandhani (DMCH)- 8624040  
Sandhani (SMCH)- 7310061, 7310061, 7310061, 7319022  
Dhaka Medical College Hospital- 8626812-9

##### Eye Bank

Sandhani International Eye Bank- 8614040

##### Ambulances For

##### Dead Body

Anzuman Mafidul Islam (Kakrail) 9336611, Gandaria 7319808, 7318166,  
Al-Markajul Islam 9127867,

### MARKET CLOSED

Gulshan 1, 2 markets-Friday  
Elephant Road-Friday  
Bishal Center-Friday  
Baitual Mukarram Market-Friday  
Polwell Market-Friday  
BCS Computer City-Friday  
Isha Khan Shopping Complex-Friday.  
Rajlaxmi Complex-Friday  
Stadium Market-Friday  
Bangabazar Market-Friday  
National Museum-Thursdays  
Ahsan Manzil--Thursday.  
New Market-Tuesday  
Gausia Market-Tuesday  
Mouchak Market-Sunday  
Dhanmondi Hawkers Market-Tuesday  
Dhanmondi Hawkers Market-Tuesday  
Eastern Plaza-Sunday  
Farmview Super Market-Sunday  
Muktijuddha Jadughar-Sunday  
Dhaka Zoo-Sunday  
Shishu Jadughar-Sunday

### TAXI CAB

#### Yellow Cab

Navana 9558065

Salida 9344477, 0171620881

Cosmo 9112959 and 8127191

Cab One 7113282-3

Nihon 8624741-2

Orion 9347277

Anudip 8125285 and 8127611

Capital 9352847

### TRAIN TIMING

Subarna Express  
Mahanagar Prabhati  
Mahanagar Godhuli  
Turna  
Parabat Express  
Joyantika Express  
Upaban Express  
Tista Express  
Ekata Express  
Upakul Express  
Padma Express

Leaves Dhaka at 4:00 pm  
Leaves Dhaka at 7:30 am  
Leaves Dhaka at 3:05 pm  
Leaves Dhaka at 11:00 pm  
Leaves Dhaka at 6:30 am  
Leaves Dhaka at 12:30 pm  
Leaves Dhaka at 9:30 pm  
Leaves Dhaka at 7:00 am  
Leaves Dhaka at 5:00 pm  
Leaves Dhaka at 6:00 am  
Leaves Dhaka at 9:20 pm

Reaches Chittagong at 10:15 pm  
Reaches Chittagong at 2:55 pm  
Reaches Chittagong at 9:11 pm  
Reaches Chittagong at 7:05 am  
Reaches Sylhet at 2:30 pm  
Reaches Sylhet at 9:20 pm  
Reaches Sylhet at 6:40 am  
Reaches Bahadurabad at 1:05 pm  
Reaches Bahadurabad at 1:55 pm  
Reaches Noakhali at 1:35 pm  
Reaches Jagannath at 2:30 pm

### LIBRARY & INFO

#### Libraries, Cultural and Information Centers

Central Public Library- 8626001-4, 8113769, 8113604  
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  
Drik Photo Gallery- 9120125, 8112954, 8123412