

Over 11,000 pack like sardines in five DU women's dormitories

SABRINA KARIM MURSHED

One of the after effects of Dhaka University (DU) admissions is that female students face tough competition for accommodation in any one of the five women's dormitories.

Of the 28,600 DU students 40 percent are female. Only a few are residents of Dhaka living with either family or relatives while others who apply for admission from far distances come with the hope of getting accommodation in the dormitories.

A handful of private hostels are available but most students cannot afford the prices they charge.

"It costs only Tk 12 a month to stay in a DU dorm. The hostels cost at least Tk 2,000 a month," said Tabassum, a Rokeya Hall resident.

Female students said that obtaining accommodation in DU hostels is tougher than coping with the new environment of the university.

"We are not concerned about adapting to a new place or situation - our worry is whether or not we will get accommodation," said Amina Khatun, a DU fresher.

The process of getting accom-

modation is long and takes up to six months, said students of different halls. "It takes a long time -- up to six-seven months to complete official ordeals," said Lima, a resident of Bangladesh-Kuwait Moitree Hall. Yet, she added, that even after such a long period accommodation is not guaranteed.

Scores at the entrance test play an important role in hostel accommodation, along with the distance a student comes from.

"You are lucky if you are among the top scorers at the entrance exam, coming from a distance. Your early accommodation is certain," said Tanima, a student of Shamsunnahar Hall. Though some students fussed about the rule, others said that there is no alternative way to allocating available space.

"It seems a big battle has been won when one gets accommodation," said another resident of Bangladesh-Kuwait Moitree Hall, but complained of the harsh attitude of some of the house tutors, leaving students in tears.

"One tutor asked a girl to put up at the Ramna or Suhrawardy Udyan when the student told the tutor that she could not find

appropriate accommodation elsewhere," she added.

Boarders of Rokeya Hall too, complained of the rude attitude of four of their house tutors and on verifying the allegation the on-duty house tutor admitted that such occurrences might take place occasionally.

"With limited accommodation, it is quite tough for a house tutor to handle all grievances, especially when a stream of students ask for space. Moreover, she might be sick and may get irritated with the students," she said.

Most women's dormitories accommodate twice as many as their capacity. The 90-roomed Bangladesh-Kuwait Moitree Hall has 360 beds with more than 600 residents and Rokeya Hall with 720 beds accommodates 1,322 students as the dormitory authorities permit students to share a single bed with another.

"What could our madams (house tutors) do if there is no room for such a large number of students," said Hanufa, a student of Rokeya Hall. "We understand they have limitations too," she added.

Six instead of four girls can be accommodated in a small room

without much thought, but it becomes a difficult when a student, especially a fresher, is put into a single room, known as the 'gono room' where more than 10 stay together.

The Bangladesh-Kuwait Moitree Hall has three 'gono-rooms', each accommodating 12. "But when the new entrants arrive, the rooms will be overcrowded," said Salma, a resident.

Students also said that freshers look up to leaders of student wings of different political parties to arrange accommodation.

"Although they end up in gono rooms, they are compelled to attend meetings and rallies of those parties," said one resident. However, political influence is now far less than before, they said.

On an average 20 are accommodated in each of the five gono rooms of the Shamsunnahar Hall, while Rokeya Hall's gono rooms have been done away with for the moment, but will be back when the new entrants pour in, said Sraboni, a resident of Rokeya Hall, where 26 share a single gono room.



Rokeya Hall, one of the five women's dormitories at DU.

that one disadvantage of community living is the noise.

"I cannot concentrate on my studies with so many around," she said, adding that there is

hardly a place to keep one's belongings. However, she believes freshers get a better chance to fit in a new place when so many of them put up together

rather than share rooms with seniors.

Regarding outsiders occupying dormitories, Hanufa of Rokeya Hall said that because of strict

checks by the authorities, such occupation is not possible. However, she added that a guest could be accommodated at a fee of Tk 200.

Bus terminal facelift to take six more months

ABDUL KADER

The development work of three bus terminals -- Sayedabad, Mohakhali and Gabtoli -- will take six more months to complete because of inclusion of a terminal building in the plan.

A senior engineer of the construction firm yesterday said the cost of the work has also increased to Tk 47 crore from Tk 44.20 crore because of the new inclusion.

The project under the Dhaka Urban Transport Project (DUTP) financed by the World Bank (WB) is being done by Abdul Monem Ltd (Bangladesh)-JPC (China), a Bangladesh-China joint venture construction firm.

The Roads and Highways Department is implementing the project.

Each terminal will have an array of infrastructure facilities, including a number of terminal buildings, taxi stand, parking bay for buses, covered walkway, prayer room, police control room, two rest buildings, toilets, a parking lot for about 200 buses, passengers shed, loading and unloading facilities for 300 buses and ticket counters.

"Eighty percent work of the terminals is complete," said Abdus Samad Azad, Senior Engineer of Abdul Monem Ltd. "Passengers' shed, prayer room and main terminal administrative buildings of Sayadabad and Gabtoli will be renovated. A new building will be built at Mohakhali. Facilities for passengers' movement and bus loading and unloading and a bitumi-

nous road for city buses and light vehicles are yet to be constructed."

The work will complete in December this year, he said.

On a recent visit to Sayedabad, one of the three terminals, this correspondent found that buses are parked haphazardly and passengers are boarded on the main

road in front of the terminal. Passengers are often harassed by bus helpers.

Under a contract on September 24 last year, the Dhaka City Corporation, which owns the terminals, handed the maintenance responsibility to two private operators -- Rora Enterprise and Diba Enterprise -- on a three-year contract with a

view to providing better safety and cleanliness to passengers.

But the DCC cancelled the contract with Rora on May because of violating the contract. Since then, the DCC itself is operating the Sayedabad and Mohakhali terminals while Gabtoli is being operated by Diba.



Development work in progress at Gabtoli terminal.

Rundown roads plague DU campus

HASAN JAHD TUSHER

The roads on the Dhaka University (DU) campus are in a state of dilapidation -- a condition that has been prevailing for over two decades.

For more than 28,600 students of the university, it is an every day ordeal to move around the campus on the pockmarked roads on the 700-acre campus.

The engineering section of the DU is supposed to repair the roads, but officials say they have no fund for the job.

The university authorities allocated Tk 1.80 crore in fiscal 2004-2005 for maintenance of roads and other structures on the campus. But officials allege that a chunk of the fund is misused by a section of corrupt officials and employees.

"If the university does not get adequate funds from the government, it is not possible to repair the roads. We have written to the

University Grants Commission and the education ministry for funds, but we have not heard from them," DU Chief Engineer Amir Hossain said.

University Treasurer Prof. Syed Rashidul Hasan said that there is no specific budget for the renovation of the university roads. "The road from Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Hall has become almost unusable," he said. "Hopefully we are going to reconstruct the road within three months."

The roads are also waterlogged making it difficult for students to commute in monsoon.

The four roads inside the Mall area of the university that connect to the main road in front of the vice-chancellor's residence are in a worst condition.

All the four roads leading to five student halls -- Surya Sen Hall, Jashimuddin Hall, Ziaur Rahman Hall, International Hostel and Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Hall -- are also in a run-

down state. The condition of the road from the University Laboratory School to teachers' quarters behind the International Hostel are no better.

Atiqur Rahman Atik, a student of Jashimuddin Hall and also a leader of the Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD), said he has been staying in hall in 1993 and has not seen any maintenance work on the campus in the last 12 years.

Sagor, another student of the hall, said the university authorities should take quick steps for renovation of the campus roads.

The authorities recently renovated two roads -- one in front of the DUCSU building and another on the western side of the Arts building.

Sources said a four-member committee has been formed recently with university engineers to submit a road maintenance scheme to the communications ministry.

healthouting, taxicab & train timing

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
 Azampur 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- 8311731-25
 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 College Hospital -- 7310061-4, 7319002-6
 Cholera Research Hospital (ICDDR,B)- 8811751-60
 Monowra Hospital 8319802, 8318135
Blood Bank
 Red Crescent Centre- 9116563
 Sandhani (DMCH)- 8624040
 Sandhani (SMCH)- 7310061, 7310061, 7319022
 Dhaka Medical College Hospital- 8626812-9
Eye Bank
 Sandhani International Eye Bank- 8614040
Ambulances For Dead Body
 Anzuman Matidul Islam (Kakrail) 9336611, Gandaria 7319808, 7318166,
 Al-Markajul Islam 9127867,

MARKET CLOSED

- Gulshan 1, 2 markets-Friday
 Elephant Road-Friday
 Bishal Center-Friday
 Baltual Mukarram Market-Friday
 Polwell Market-Friday
 BCS Computer City-Friday
 Isha Khan Shopping Complex-Friday.
 Rajaxmi Complex-Friday
 Stadium Market-Friday
 Bangabazar Market-Friday
 National Museum-Thursdays
 Ahsan Manzil-Thursdays.
 New Market-Tuesday
 Gausia Market-Tuesday
 Mouchak Market-Sunday
 Dhanmondi Hawkers Market-Tuesday
 Dhanmondi Hawkers Market-Tuesday
 Eastern Plaza-Sunday
 Farmview Super Market-Sunday
 Muktiudha 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
Union 8130485
 Kool 0171826731
Black Cab
 Cab Ex 9358401
 Cabline 8321162
 JBS Cab 019364575
 Sajan 018126036
 Anudip -- 8125285 and 8127611
TRAIN TIMING
Subarna Express
 Mahanagar Prabhali
 Mahanagar Godhufi
 Turna
Parabat Express
 Joyantika Express
 Upaban Express
 Tista Express
 Ekata Express
 Upakul Express
 Agnibeena Express
 Leaves Dhaka at 4:30 pm
 Leaves Dhaka at 7:30 am
 Leaves Dhaka at 3:15 pm
 Leaves Dhaka at 11:00 pm
 Leaves Dhaka at 6:40 am
 Leaves Dhaka at 9:45 pm
 Leaves Dhaka at 12:45 pm
 Leaves Dhaka at 6:40 am
 Leaves Dhaka at 7:00 am
 Leaves Dhaka at 5:00 pm
 Leaves Dhaka at 8:00 pm
 Leaves Dhaka at 9:20 pm

- Cab One 7113282-3
 Palki 0171052500
 Cab I 7113282
 Jatri 0171540074
 Nipun 9572277
 R-Cab 8914782
 Star Cab 9571919
 Shihab 018202477 & 018228675
 KGN 8620011
 Reaches Chittagong at 10:35 pm
 Reaches Chittagong at 1:55 pm
 Reaches Chittagong at 10:55 pm
 Reaches Chittagong at 6:40 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 11:15
 Reaches Noakhali at 5:00 am
 Reaches Jagannath at 2:30 pm

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
 Drik Photo Gallery- 9120125,
 8112954, 8123412