



PHOTO STAR

POOR MAINTENANCE BY DCC

Rajuk wants parks back

ABDUL KADER

The Rajdhani Unnayan Katripakkha (Rajuk) is set to take back a number of parks from Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) because of its failure to maintain their character.

Rajuk's chief engineer M Emdadul Islam told The Daily Star by phone on Sunday that they will take back the Panthakunja, also known as Population Park, in front of Hotel Sonargaon next week.

"We will bring back the atmosphere of the park by landscaping. We want to turn it into a suitable place again for the public as it has become a spot for cattle rearing now," said Islam.

However, a DCC official said the corporation would hand over the park after conducting an eviction drive.

According to Islam, Rajuk wants back the Gulshan South Park, which he said has become a sweepers' colony, Wonderland in Gulshan and a park in Motijheel where the DCC has started constructing a public toilet.

Regarding Wonderland, now an amusement park for children, Islam said that it was an open playground once and claimed that people want it returned to its former character.

The DCC has about 47 parks of various sizes. It was given responsibility of maintenance through a notification during the Ershad regime although Rajuk owns the parks.

The DCC has leased out three parks at Shyamoli, Gulshan and Sayedabad to private organisations. It is supposed to take care of the rest of the parks but with excep-

tion of the Shishu Park at Shahbagh, others have slid into degradation.

Of them, several parks like the ones at Karwan Bazar and Sayedabad have been gobbled up for other purposes or have totally lost their characteristics apparently due to the negligence of the DCC.

Because of this scenario, it was decided at a meeting of the Good Governance and Development Committee, headed by principal secretary to the Prime Minister Dr. Kamal Uddin Siddiqui, a few months ago that the parks would be returned to Rajuk.

On the handing over issue Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon (BAPA) General Secretary Abu Naser Khan commented that it has to be ascertained first whether Rajuk had enough manpower to maintain the parks.

The DCC had also planned on leasing some parks to business concerns in the hope that they can maintain those better.

In this regard, the DCC constituted a guideline that the private ventures will not use the park for any business purpose like installing billboards of their companies and stuff like that.

Dhaka mayor Sadeque Hossain Khoka was not available to talk on the issue as he is now abroad.

Meanwhile, following a recent instruction from the mayor, a committee headed by noted intellectual and environmentalist Prof Sirajul Islam Chowdhury was formed to improve the conditions of the Osmani Uddyan, a public park.

According to sources, the committee will formulate a plan and start fieldwork within the next three months.

Time for recreation on wheels

CITY CORRESPONDENT

Amusement-starved Dhaka city dwellers are going to experience a new innovation soon that may offer them an opportunity to forget life's monotony for a while.

On August 19, a mobile amusement park called 'Ananda Ghurni' will hit the City Club Ground in Mirpur's Pallabi.

Ananda Ghurni is the first recreational facility on wheels in the country. It is arriving in Dhaka for one and a half months after winning the hearts of people in Cox's Bazaar and Narayanganj.

The Ananda Ghurni can be transported to different areas of the country as it is a totally portable.

Such mobile parks are very popular in India. Some Indian parks have even made the long journey to the Middle East on trucks and lorries.

The Ananda Ghurni offers various attractions for children and adults and boasts some international standard rides like Ranger, Dragon Coaster, Swing Chair and Beach Buggy.

Every item at the park guarantees enjoyment and adventure according to people who have visited Ananda Ghurni.

After its time in Dhaka, the Ananada Ghurni will head back to Cox's Bazaar to catch the start of the tourist season.

Rafiqul Islam, managing director of Neptune Mobile Amusement Park, informed that Ananda Ghurni was first opened in Cox's Bazaar in March 11 this year and was an instant hit.

People poured in when it was in



Striking Car

Narayangan and Islam was very much hopeful that Dhaka dwellers will also love it.

"Our plan is to reach all the 64 districts of the country with this mobile park. Only a 400x400 feet space is enough to set up the Ananada Ghurni. So our goal to roam the county is certainly attainable," Islam added.

He also said that a second unit of the mobile amusement park would be launched soon.

Meanwhile, Mirpur residents who have heard of Ananada Ghurni, are eagerly waiting in anticipation.

"In Mirpur we are totally deprived

of recreational facilities. The arrival of the mobile park is a welcoming news for us," said Abu Kaoser Chowdhury.

"I managed to visit the Ananda Ghurni when it was in Narayanganj. I enjoyed it so much that I do not want to miss it for anything when it is in Dhaka," said Ripa who lives in Azimpur.

Ticket prices of different rides vary from Tk 10 to 30 and entry fee to the park is Tk 20.

The Ananda Ghurni will remain open from 3pm to 9pm on weekdays and from 10am to 10pm on holidays at the City Club Ground.

Dark side of Baily Road

Dopers, drug peddlers rule 'theatreland'

SYED TASHFIN CHOWDHURY

Baily Road and its surroundings have been a 'safe haven' for drug peddlers and addicts for the past few years and the residents of the area are too afraid to protest such activities.

The area, vibrant with the presence of youth and the audience of the numerous drama and other performances at the Mahila Samity auditorium, has been the target of a number of drug selling gangs. These peddlers and their financiers -- some armed hoodlums -- are now in control of the area.

"Even the elite and influential residents of Baily Road dread their own safety and

tend to keep mum about the daily menace," said Azim (not his real name), a guard of a building in the area.

The addicts gang up at different spots near the Mahila Samity and Siddheswari Circular Road. In case of police patrolling the area, these addicts mingle into the crowds of young people, a common feature in the area.

A wide range of drugs is smuggled out and sold from different 'hideouts' based in Shantinagar Plaza and nearby markets. Along with cannabis, cocaine, heroine and other drugs, even Phensidyl, is sold at these points.

The customers are usually members from the elite class and are ready to spend

large amounts of money to satisfy their addiction. When the transaction is complete, the addicts move to other spots on Baily Road, where they hang out and quench their thirst to 'get high' and tend to lose self-control. As such, arguments and fistfights are regular incidents in the area.

Three groups are known to carry out this business in the area, and sources said that even theatre activists are not safe in these surroundings.

"A few days back, I had a 'run-in' with a notorious person who tried to rush in to the theatre looking for someone," said Tomal Ali, a theatre activist, describing his tale. Ali's colleagues later pulled him away from the scene fearing his safety.

The police have not been able to capture any of these criminals as yet, though they are well aware of the activities in the area.

"We send teams almost every week but the very sight of police undercover at a distance, gives the addicts and the peddlers enough time to flee," said Ramna Police Station's duty officer.





Recently, the mobile, detective branch and cobra teams of the police, operating in plain clothes, have been deployed to patrol these areas.

"With accurate information and complaints, we would surely be able to apprehend these criminals and stop such nuisance," said the duty officer.



Ranger

healthouting,taxicab&train

HEALTH		MARKET CLOSED		TAXI CAB		LIBRARY & INFO-	
							
Hospitals		Training Institute- 8624827, 8624980		Shamarita Hospital- 9131901		Libraries, Cultural and Information Centers	
Heart		Eye		Suhrawardy Hospital -- 9130800,		Central Public Library- 8626001-4,	
National Institute of Cardio Vascular Diseases (NICVD),		Islamia Eye Hospital-9110794,		9122560-69		Shishu Academy- 9564128	
- 9130800, 9122560-59		9119315		Salimullah Medical Collage Hospital -- 7310061-4, 7319002-6		Shilpakala Academy- 8614673	
		National Eye Hospital- 8117202,		Cholera Research Hospital (ICDRB)- 8811751-60		Bangla Academy- 8619550	
		8114807		Monowra Hospital 8319802, 8318135		Islamic Foundation- 9550280, 9556407	
Burn		Dental		Blood Bank		Nazrul Institute- 9114602	
Dhaka Medical College Hospital		Dental College -9002035		Red Crescent Centre- 9116563		Ford Foundation- 8116133	
Burn Unit-8626812-6				Sandhani (DMCH)- 8624040		Alliance Francaise- 8611557	
Cancer		Orthopaedics		Sandhani (SMCH)- 7310061,		Information Resource Center, The American Center - 8813440-4,	
National Cancer Institute-8014914,		National Orthopaedics (Pangu) Hospital- 9114075, 9112150		7310061,7319022		9886395-9	
8826561-65				Dhaka Medical Collage Hospital- 8626812-9		British Council- 8618867-8, 8618905-7	
Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University-8612550-4,		General		Eye Bank		Community Development Library- 8113769, 8113604	
861455-9		Dhaka Medical College Hospital- 8626812-6		Sandhani International Eye Bank- 8614040		Goethe Institute Int'l- Dhaka- 9126525-6	
Diabetes		Rushmono General Hospital- 8317819		Ambulances For Dead Body		Indian Information Centre & Cultural Library- 8615096	
Diabetic Research Hospital (BIRDEM)- 9661551-5,		Holy Family Hospital- 83111731-25		Anzuman Mafidul Islam (Kakrail 9336611, Gandaria 7319808,		The Russian Cultural Centre- 9116314, 9118531, 9118314	
8616641-50		Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University Hospital- 8612550-4, 8614545-9		7318166,		Drik Photo Gallery- 9120125, 8112954, 8123412	
Mother & Child Care		Bangladesh Medical College & Hospital- 8115443, 9118202,		Al-Markajul Islam 9127867,		Press Institute of Bangladesh (PIB) 9330081-4	
Shishu Hospital- 9119119, 8116061-62							
Azimpur Mother & Child Health							