

Gulshan not so serene

FAIZUL A TANIM

Although Gulshan continues to enjoy the reputation as an elite area of the city, in reality it is not quite the elegant locality one might be led to expect.

Scattered waste dumping spots, damaged roads and alleys, stagnant water, manholes overflowing with sewage are some of the common nuisance the present day Gulshan resident has grown used to.

Infact cleanliness as become a serious concern following an initiative by locals who have assigned separate groups of people to operate garbage vans.

These vans collect the kitchen waste from houses at a fixed time of the day. However, as they do not work in a co-ordinated manner, waste is deposited at specific garbage dumps of the Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) at different times throughout the day. The DCC's garbage trucks have a set time to retrieve the rubbish. That is why some waste can be found lying all day creating foul odour and an unhealthy environment.

"The teams that collect rubbish from houses are not authorised by the DCC. These are individual initiatives and the groups are collecting the garbage and dumping them in their own convenient time. This is creating a problem for us. If all waste is deposited at the same specified time, it becomes easier for us to clean up," said executive officer of DCC's Zone 9 Md Saiful Islam.

"We have already reduced the number of dumping spots after repeated complaints of stink from local residents. They have also agreed to deposit their wastes at the specified locations. Now there are just four or five such spots around Gulshan and life is becoming better," claimed Islam.

Islam added that it was not possible for the DCC alone to collect rubbish from every household and because of that a co-ordinated and systematic approach from the residents was needed.

"Garbage van owners said that most people did not allow them to collect rubbish after 6:00 pm because of security con-

cerns. This is the main reason for the problem with the time of waste dumping. We are yet to find a solution for this."

The conditions of roads in the area have deteriorated to an alarming extent in recent times. There are cracks and gaping holes on streets and rain or flood water get stored in them. Stagnant water is ideal breeding ground for mosquitoes and mosquito menace is a common complaint here.

Long traffic snarl-ups have also become a regular feature due to the state of the roads.

"A tender of Tk 10 crore of work has already been floated. The carpeting of these streets will start on completion of certain formalities. The western part of Gulshan Avenue is more or less okay. It is only the flood-affected areas in the east that need renovation. We will start work as soon as the Nagar Bhaban committee gives its approval," said Islam.

Regarding the overflowing of manholes, Islam said that Rajuk had built the drainage system long ago and then handed the responsibility over to the DCC.

According to him, Rajuk made drain outlets that ran straight into the Gulshan Lake for which the waterbody is being polluted. Also indiscriminate dumping of rubbish in drains has suspended the normal flow of sewage.

"Now WASA's sewage lines are overflowing and the DCC can do very little about it unless WASA looks into the matter. The lines have either been blocked or the drains cannot take the pressure of so much sewage. This has resulted in continuous leakage of manholes," said Islam.

Living in an apartment overlooking the lake could be a dream come true for many but there are residents in Gulshan who would beg to differ.

"Slum dwellers living across the lake cross over to the other side at will on boats. They often litter the walkway bordering the lake and frequently dump their garbage in the water. Besides, the sound of their engine boats create noise pollution," said Gulrukh Rahman whose house is just beside the Gulshan Lake.



Garbage strewn beside a park in the heart of Gulshan 2 waiting to be collected.

Libraries losing appeal

Libraries of reputed institutions are almost non-functional without a librarian

AKBAR HOSSAIN

The library-culture is fast diminishing from government colleges as students are becoming apathetic towards library activities because of poor collection of books and general negligence of the authorities.

In most graduate and post-graduate level colleges, the librarian's post has remained vacant for years and the libraries have become virtually non-functional.

Even libraries of reputed institutions of the capital like Dhaka College or Eden Girls College have been continuing their activities without a librarian for quite some time.

Many teachers and students this correspondent spoke to complained of scarcity of books and logistics at their respective colleges.

In Dhaka College, there are about 10,000 students from Higher Secondary Certificate (HSC) to Masters level. But its library has the capacity to accommodate only 40 students.

"I have hardly visited the college library since my admission as it offers almost no service to the students," said a third year student of English at Dhaka College. "Books are kept in such an unorganised way that it becomes impossible for students to know where to look for the what," he added.

Mariam Begum, Principal of Dhaka College said that they have been without a librarian for the last five years.

"The Directorate of Secondary and

Higher Secondary Education is supposed to make arrangements for appointing librarians at government colleges. But I do not understand why they have been hesitant in addressing the problem," said Mariam while talking to Star City.

Eden Girls University College boasts around 14,000 students. However its library is only big enough for 120.

Conditions of seminar libraries of government colleges are not much different. There are separate seminar libraries for every department where only Honours and Masters level students are eligible to study.

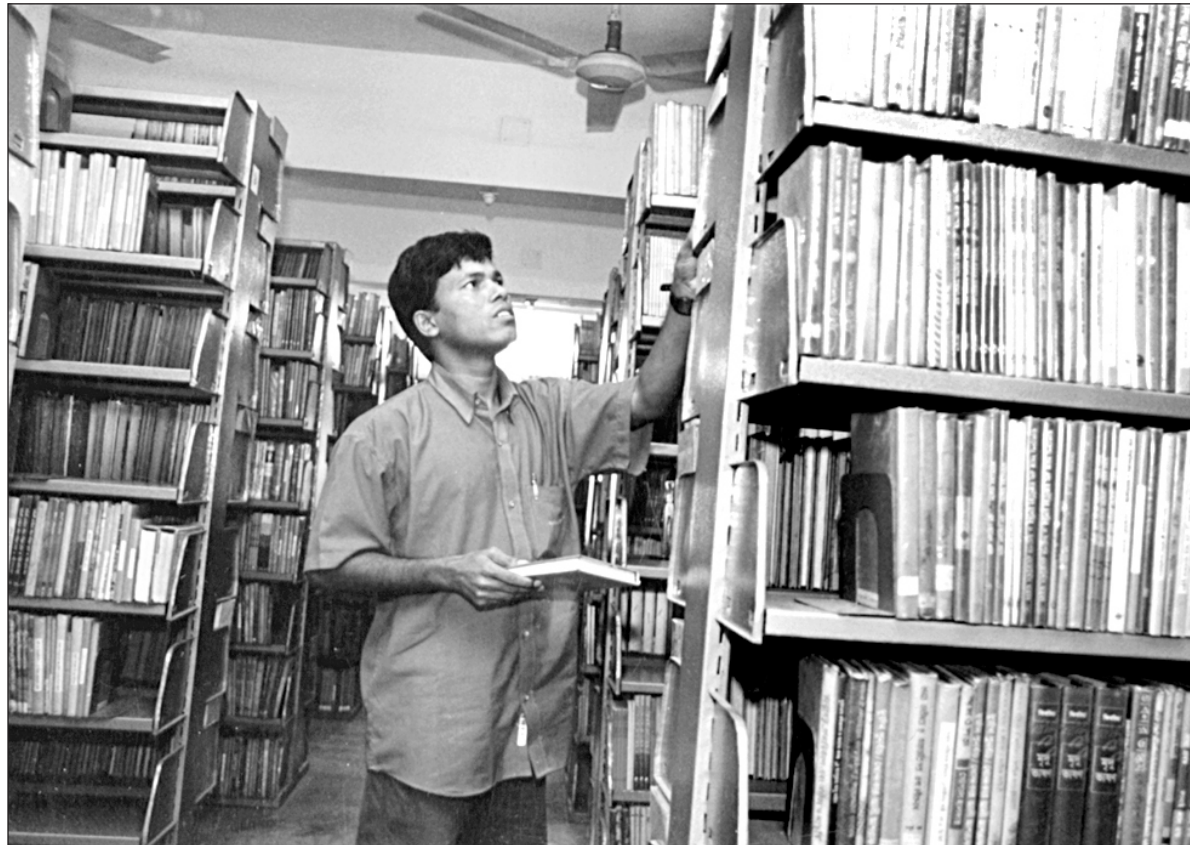
But students alleged that although they have to pay Tk 500 to Tk 1000 as seminar fees while taking admission, these are as ineffective as their college libraries.

"In many colleges, the authorities do not buy books for the seminar library. Rather they spend the seminar fees for other purposes like picnics, freshers receptions, cultural programmes," said a teacher of Dhaka College wishing anonymity.

But Mariam Begum claimed that students of her college were actually benefiting from the seminar libraries.

When asked about the recruitment dilemma of librarians at government colleges, Director General of Directorate of Secondary and Higher Secondary Education Professor Mohammed Junaid acknowledged the problem.

"We are trying to recruit professional librarians in the colleges but I can not give you a specific timeframe regarding when these vacant posts might be filled up. As the post of a librarian in government colleges is a gazetted position, we have to give a requisition for the vacancy first. The Ministry of Education will then send the requisition to the Public Service Commission for conducting the recruitment test," explained Professor Junaid.



Lost in books. A library user browses through shelves not knowing where to look for what he needs.

A laborious way to eke out living

CITY CORRESPONDENT

Hundreds of people are sitting huddled together. In tattered dresses, their sunburnt faces look forlorn. Only their expectant eyes burn brightly.

At 8 o'clock in the morning, they sit at Newmarket with whatever they have - bamboo baskets, crowbars and spades. Some are masons, some carpenters and some painters too. They are up for sale - at least for the day. They are all waiting for customers to make their pick. The best of them - the muscled ones - have already been hired. Now wait the lesser of the lot. Weaklings. Inexperienced. Not the ones that would give the

best of menial labour.

Thus the capital's unorganised labour market gets off to a good day. About four to five-lakh labourers gather at some city points to trade their muscle power.

Such markets sit at Kamalapur, Khilgaon, Malibag, Fokirapool, Gulistan, Fulbaria, Shahbagh, Maghbar, Tejgaon, Mohakhali, Farmgate, Asad Gate, Shyamoli, Kollyanpur, Gabtoli, Mirpur, Shawrapara, Newmarket, Sadarghat, Loharpur, Postagola, Jurain, Jatrabari and Sayedabad.

Between 500 and 5,000 labourers, mainly from Mymensingh, Rangpur, Barisal and erosion-hit areas, gather in these markets every day with the crack of the dawn. The trade is usually com-

plete by 8 o'clock. The leftovers will wait till afternoon in the false hope of getting something, well, anything to get by.

"If we hire them in bunch, we get them cheap," said a *dalal* (labour contractor) at Newmarket.

One experienced mason or carpenter costs Tk 220 a day and an apprentice gets Tk 120. The head masons or the agents of developers pick the labourers from the lot.

When the deal is done through a middleman, the labourer has to share half his wage as commission with him.

Sometimes, customers directly hire labourers directly from the market.



Up for sale ... Day workers gather at New Market early in the morning looking for a prospective employer. Unless they get one, they may have to go without food for the day.

useful telephonenumber numbers

OURIER SERVICES

International

Air Borne Express- 9561371, 9561372, 9550724
Air Couriers Intl (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 Intl 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-

National

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
Asian Courier Service Ltd.- 8313543
BAE- 9884851
Central Courier Service- 9881118
Confidence Courier Service Ltd. 9567036
Chisty Courier- 7110177-9,
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
Sundaran Courier Services- 9551984, 9556189, 9551656
Sunrise Courier Services- 9568751
World Runner Express Ltd. 9112068, Fax - 880-2-9112068

TIPS

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

LIBRARY & INFO-

Libraries, Cultural and Information Centers

Central Public Library- 8626001-4,
Shishu Academy- 9564128
Shilpakala Academy- 8614673
Bangla Academy- 8619550
Islamic Foundation- 9550280, 955640
The American Centre (IRC)- 8813440-4, 9886395
The Nazrul Institute- 9114602
Ford Foundation- 8116133
Alliance Francaise- 8611557
British Council- 8618867-8, 8618905-7
Community Development Library- 8113769, 8113604
Goethe Institute Intl'- Dhaka- 9126525-6
Indian Information Centre & Cultural Library- 8615096
The Russian Cultural Centre- 9116314, 9118531, 9118314
Drik Photo Gallery- 9120125, 8112954, 8123412

OUTING

Museum and Zoo

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

CITY BUS ROUTE

Bus No. Route

1 Gulistan-Shahbagh-Banglamotor-Farmgate-Mirpur 10, 11, 12
2 Gulistan-Shahbagh-Banglamotor-Farmgate-Mirpur 1, 2
3 Gulistan-Shahbagh-Farmgate-Mahakhali-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 chattr- 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-Kalbagan-Shyamoli-Mirpur 1, 10, 11, 12
10 Sadarghat-Gulistan-Kakrail-Malibagh-Rampura-Biswa Road-Tongi Bridge
11 Sayedabad-Motijheel-Fakirapool-Maghbazar-Mohakhali-Tongi Bridge
11/A Sayedabad-Khilgaon-Malibagh-Rampura-Airport-Tongi Bridge
12 Shanir Akhra-Shahbagh-Farmgate-Asadgate-Mohammadpur
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
24 Gulistan-Maghbazar-Mohakhali-Airport-Uttara-Bipile

Starts from

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