



Cattle graze in an enclosure within Panthakunja park meant to keep the city healthy.

# DCC eating up parks?

SULTANA RAHMAN

The Dhaka City Corporation (DCC), which is supposed to look after and protect the parks and open spaces of the capital, is allegedly turning them into business locations.

"We have developed these open spaces and playgrounds to keep the city healthy. But the DCC is now constructing buildings on them for commercial purpose in gross violation of the Town Improvement act," said a Rajdhani Unnayan Katrapakkha (Rajuk) official who preferred not to be named.

Surprisingly, neither the DCC nor the Rajuk could provide the exact numbers of playgrounds and open spaces in Dhaka when this correspondent inquired. As per the current rules, Rajuk develops the open spaces and hands them over to the DCC for maintenance. But reportedly, there has

been a recent trend of converting these areas into commercial facilities. In this manner, many open spaces and parks that are clearly marked in the Dhaka Metropolitan Development Master Plan (DMDP), have lost their characteristics.

The DCC has constructed the Mahanagar Nattya Mancha on the park in front of the Bangabhaban. The park is distinctly present in the master plan. The DCC has also leased out a park in Gulshan, which has been converted into the Wonderland amusement centre. The Sweepers Colony in Gulshan is also on a parkland. The DCC is now constructing public toilets on the Dilkusha Park in Motijheel.

DCC's chief executive officer Md Habibur Rahman however denied that they were destroying the parks and claimed that they were only making them more convenient for the public.

structing the toilets at Dilkusha Park while leaving some open space at the same time. Public toilets are very much essential for the healthy environment of such a crowded area," said Rahman.

The Open space, Playgrounds, Parks and Wetland Protection Act 2000 bars any kind of changes in the character of the location. It also says that these places can not be leased out for any business purpose.

The Town Improvement Act 1953 meanwhile says that the DCC is responsible for maintenance of the parks and playgrounds.

"As per the law, the DCC has no right to construct buildings on the open spaces or make changes to their characters," said Syeda Rizwana Hasan, director programme of Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association (BELA).

Rajuk's chief engineer M Emdadul Islam said that they

were surveying how many parks were handed over to the DCC.

"Actually we face lots of embarrassing quarries from the plot owners. Some seek explanations as to why parks near their plots have been demolished or no longer exist," Islam said.

Environment experts believe that a densely populated city like Dhaka requires around 40 per cent open area while the capital has less than one per cent.

"The authorities should shed this attitude of grabbing open spaces. Otherwise the city will lose its livelihood," commented Abu Naser, secretary of Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon (Bapa).

Naser felt that the ideal authority for conserving and maintaining open spaces and playgrounds should include representatives from the DCC, Rajuk and the civil society.

## CENTRAL PUBLIC LIBRARY

# Quiet reading corner for the elderly

KAUSAR ISLAM AYON

The 'Elderly Corner' the latest section added to the Central Public Library (CPL) catering to particular tastes of the elderly, is gaining wide popularity.

Some spending afternoons in this quiet corner have expressed satisfaction at the action taken by the library authorities.

"The authorities have gathered a collection to suit our age," said Shahabuddin Ahmed, a former government

official. He urged other libraries to provide similar services.

"I am happy with this arrangement, but it would be convenient if libraries in my neighbourhood provided such facilities," said Ahmed, a Rayerbazar resident.

State Minister of Cultural Affairs Selima Rahman said: "We will consider the possibility of providing such services in all ward-libraries."

The 'Corner', situated on the first floor is equipped with 2,500 books, magazines and periodicals and can accommodate 32 readers.

"Senior citizens can relish

their favourite books in tranquility which they were demanding for a long time," said Zillur Rahman, a librarian.

"Our collection relates to politics, philosophy, religion, literature and classics preferred at later stages of life," the librarian added.

Nasirul Alam another library user suggested relocating the 'Corner' on the ground floor, after his first visit to CPL.

"The ground floor would be convenient. It is difficult for me to climb stairs," he said.

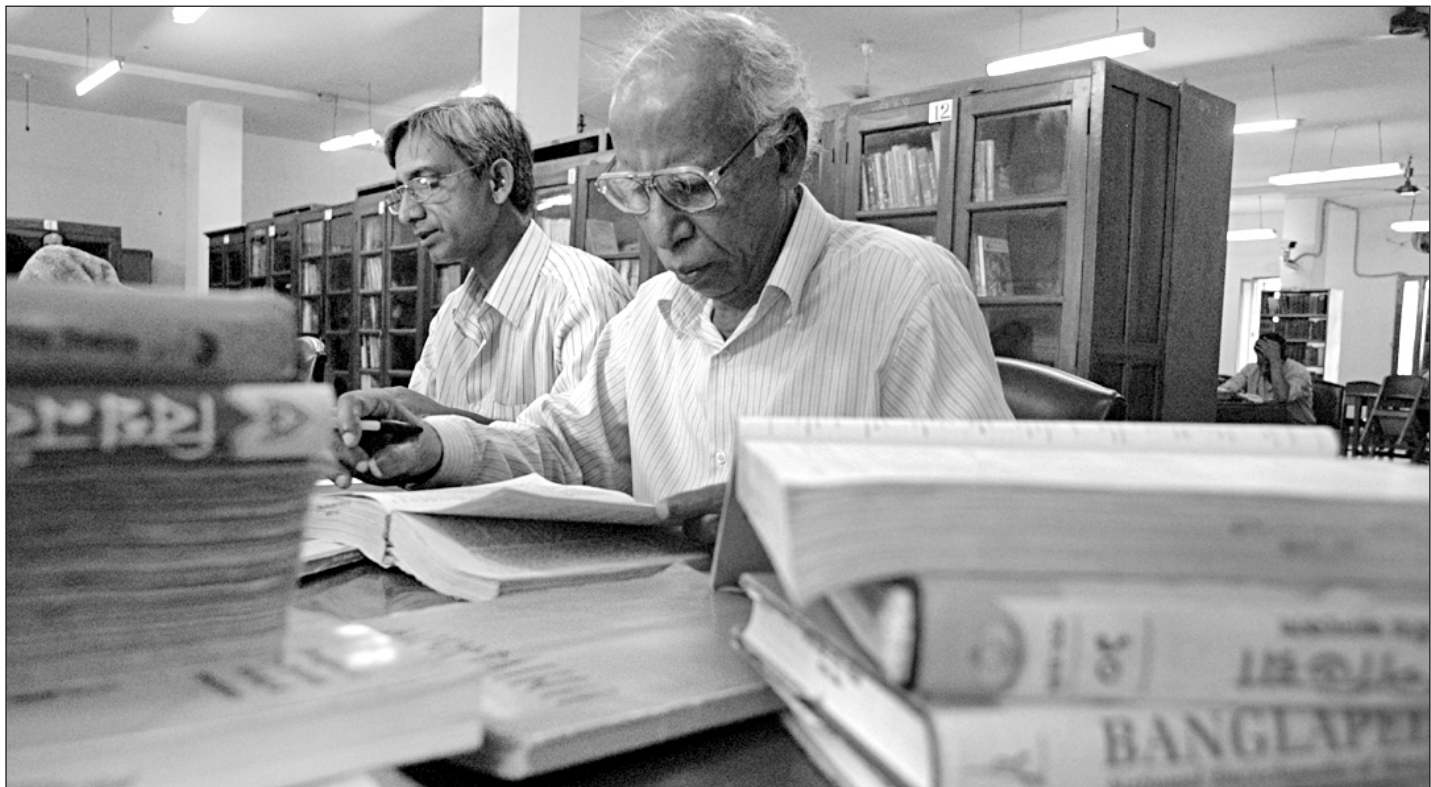
Some complained of unclean toilets.

"My visits to the library last at least 4 hours. The toilets lack hygiene and cannot be used," said Nazrul Islam, a regular library user.

The library authorities have assured that all this would be taken care of.

The 'Elderly Corner' is open on workdays from 8:00am to 8:00pm.

Other sections in the CPL are general, science, reference and children and youth and have a total of 582 seats. The number of books, periodicals and magazines in the CPL now totals to 1,41,359.



Seniors relax in their little 'corner' in the Central Public Library.



# BRTC puts in 9 more buses for women passengers

ABDUL KADER

The state-run Bangladesh Road Transport Corporation (BRTC) will introduce nine buses for women along nine routes in the capital from tomorrow.

The buses eight double-deckers and one single-decker -- will ply from 6 to 10am and 3 to 6pm.

The fare along the nine routes will be between Tk 4 and Tk 10.

The nine routes are: Mirpur Section 1 to Motijheel via Mirpur Section 10-Asad Gate-Azimpur-Plashi-Gulistan; Mirpur Section 1 to Motijheel via Mirpur Section 10-Farmgate-Gulistan; Mohammadpur to Gulistan via Satmasjid Road-Curzon Hall; Mirpur section 12

to Uttara via Mirpur Section 14-Cantonment-Banani; Mirpur section 12 to Kamalapur via Taltala-Agargaon-Khejurbagan-Sangsad Bhaban-Science Laboratory-Azimpur-Gulistan; Khilgaon to Gulistan via Taltala; Gulistan to Narayanganj; Tongi to Motijheel via Banani-Mohakhali-Magbazar and Mohammadpur to Gulshan 1 and 2 via Mohammadpur Townhall-Mohakhali.

Communications Minister Nazmul Huda will inaugurate the service at BRTC's Motijheel Bus Depot on September 9 at 3pm.

Earlier, the BRTC introduced five buses for women but only one of them are in service now.

Neyamat Ullah Bhuiyan,



director for administration and operations, BRTC, said, "We will observe the service along the routes and will increase the number of buses according to demand."

BRTC Chairman Taimur Alam

Khondaker said the new service is being introduced at the directive of Prime Minister Khaleda Zia.

At present, the BRTC operates about 737 buses along 150 routes across the country.

## 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-

#### 9550884

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

#### National

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  
Sundarban 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

### 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 Int'l- 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-Azamapur
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-Magbazar-Nabisco-Gulshan 1, 2
6 C	Motijheel Shapla chattr- Malibagh- Farmgate- Gulshan 2
7	Sadarghat-Gulistan-Magbazar-Nabisco-Gulshan 2
8	Chittagong-Motijheel-Shahbagh-Farmgate-Asad Gate-Kalyanpur-Gabtoi
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-Magbazar-Mohakhali-Tongi Bridge
11/A	Sayedabad-Khilgoan-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-Magbazar-Mohakhali-Airport-Uttara-Bipile

#### Starts from

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