



PHOTO STAR

A power distribution post in Old Dhaka with illegal power lines drawn in every direction cause great loss to PDB and Desa.

## Menace around Collegiate School

SYED TASHFIN CHOWDHURY

**Saheb Bazar area.**  
At first the tempo stand was very small during the early eighties. But as time went by, it continued to expand and now one struggles to find the entrance of the school as vehicles and commuters crowd the stand.

"The noise from the temps of the stand disrupt our classes and we have been complaining about it to our school authorities for weeks," said Abu Abdullah, a student.

The school currently has four buildings. The most affected of these is the one nearest to the boundary wall where the classes of the science department are held.

Local hoodlums and trade unions have erected their offices and shops along the walls of the school. On one portion, there are two public toilets. A party office of the ruling BNP, a garbage bin, a lottery ticket selling shop, a couple of tea stalls add to the nuisance.

Banners and billboards of cigarette ads and other items have almost covered up the signboard that bears the school's name.

The Headmaster of the school Md. Anwar Hossain and other faculty members said that they have conveyed their grievances to the Dhaka Mayor, the local ward commissioner and the Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) although DCC officials denied receiving any written complaints from the school's authorities.

"Time and again we have complained to the owners of these shops and the tempo stand. But they have turned a deaf ear to our pleas," said Ratan Kumar Saha, a teacher of the school which has some 2063 students and 50 teachers.

The busy tempo stand has obstructed the entry passage to the only gate of the school. The bustling crowd at the stand constantly blocks the way of the teachers, students, guardians and others from entering and leaving the school.

"It is only a matter of time before a tempo runs over one of us," said another teacher of the school.

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### 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 (BIRDDEM)- 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  
**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 Mafidul Islam (Kakrail 9336611, Gandaria 7319808, 7318166, Al-Markajul Islam 9127867,

#### CITY CORRESPONDENT

The government decision to put Dhaka Mosquito Control Department (DMCD) under the administrative authority of the Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) has sparked protest among the DMCD employees. As a wing of the Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development (LGRD) and Cooperatives, the DMCD has been working with the DCC since 1982 to control mosquito menace in the city.

At present the LGRD ministry is responsible for the administration of the department but the government recently decided in principle to hand over the administrative power to the city corporation.

The employees of DMCD have strongly opposed the government's decision of empowering DCC to run the department and threatened to go for a movement against it.

"We are ready to go to the court this time against the move," said a union leader of the department terming the government move "a decision contradictory to the government's employment rules."

The government took the same initiative in 1997 but failed to implement it in the face of agitation of the employees of the department.

DCC sources said the dual

governance of DMCD has made the department inactive for long and that is why the DCC had asked the government to hand over the department's administration to the corporation.

"In the last 14 years, 135 positions in this department fell vacant and the LGRD ministry did not recruit necessary manpower against the posts," said Dr Azizul Haque, chief health officer of the city corporation.

"We work along with the DMCD. If the department comes under DCC it would perform its tasks more effectively," he added.

The government took the fresh initiative to hand over the department to DCC after the corporation on April 27 this year officially applied to the government to take the department's controlling authority.

The LGRD ministry this time seems dedicated to shift the department, now run by some 400 employees. The department's office is located in city's Lalbagh area.

"The government thinks the transfer is necessary to make DMCD more active as the department has no utility under the LGRD ministry," said Serajul Haider, a senior assistant secretary of the ministry.

Nurul Islam, assistant director of DMCD, said "The government can shift any of its department to other department but a regular

governance should be made before putting a government department under an autonomous organisation."

The employees of DMCD feared it might be disadvantageous for them as the salary

scale and other benefits in the government organisations differ from that of the autonomous bodies like DCC.

"Many of the employees like me are working here for long, and we would not get deserved

pension as the pension regulations of the government and autonomous organisations are different," said an official of DMCD.

But the ministry officials said they are not going to take

any decision that would hurt the employees' interest. "We will set up proper rules and regulations before doing so," the LGRD assistant secretary assured.

# Metering goes prepaid to cut power pilferage

SULTANA RAHMAN

Dhaka Electricity Supply Authority (Desa) will launch modern prepaid metering in Banani in January in a pilot project to curb electricity pilferage and misuse.

About 2,500 meters will be installed: 2,200 of them are single-phase meters and 300 high-tension meters for household consumers.

Desa and the Power Development Board (PDB) will gradually replace postpaid meters with prepaid ones in the city in phases and simultaneous prepaid metering will also be introduced to Sylhet, Bogra, Chittagong and Sirajgonj in January.

"We have taken up the project experimentally to reduce power pilferage," said Iqbal Hasan Mahmud, state minister for power.

The prepaid system will enable consumers to buy electricity on an hourly

basis from power offices that will provide a card with a magnetic strip on its front side so that power could be reserved for any contingency period.

basis from power offices that will provide a card with a magnetic strip on its front side. Consumers will get power connections after inserting the magnetic strip in the prepaid meter.

Power could be reserved for any contingency period and consumers must inform officials about it while purchasing

the card. Desa is facing a loss of about Tk 1,200 crore in power pilferage since its inception, the state minister told Star City, adding prepaid meters will bridle the severe misuse and pilferage of electricity by commercial and private consumers in collaboration with corrupt officials.

"The causes behind the huge loss are power pilferage, unpaid bills and unabated corruption in which consumers and officials are involved," the state minister said.

The PDB and Desa are suffering system losses between 30 to 35 percent on average and there are huge uncollected power bills. Desa failed to collect Tk 35 billion in electricity bills from its consumers, while it also owes at least Tk 50 billion to the PDB in power purchase bills.

"To minimise the loss, we have to take Tk 3,000 crore in loan from the Asian Development Bank soon and pay the money back," the state minister said.

"We hope the prepaid meters will end the logjam of outstanding bills," a senior Desa official said.

New metering will be convenient for consumers, as they would be able to avoid hassles like standing in a long queue in banks to pay electricity bills or receiving ghost bills, he added.

The government will frame a law to curb power pilferage that will include jail terms and discontinuation of electricity connections.

The law will include three stages of punishment for each illegal pilferer -- if caught for the first time, he or she will spend six months in jail with six months of power cut off.

If the act is repeated, the consumer will be imprisoned for one year with power breakage for two years. If it is done a third time, the criminal will suffer seven years in jail and will be deprived of electricity.

"The law will apply both to consumers and officials as consumers cannot pilfer without dishonest officials," the state minister said.

"I don't blame the consumers for pilferage. The employees are the main culprits," Iqbal observed.

## Mosquito control staff plan agitation against handover

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#### Gulshan 1, 2 markets-Friday

Elephant Road-Friday

#### Bishal Center-Friday

Baitul 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-Thursday

Ahsan Manzil-Thursday.

#### New Market-Tuesday

Gausia Market-Tuesday

#### Mouchak Market-Sunday

Dhamondi Hawkers Market-Tuesday

#### Dhanmondi Hawkers Market-Tuesday

Eastern Plaza-Sunday

#### Farmview Super Market-Sunday

Muktijuddha Jagduhar-Sunday

Dhaka Zoo-Sunday

Shishu Jagduhar-Sunday

#### Yellow Cab

Navana 9558065

Salida 934477, 0171620881

Cosmo 9112959 and 8127191

Cab One 711