



The heavy rains caused cavities on main roads and one such affected place is at Khilgaon on the Bishwa Road.

## Rain leaves roads pockmarked

### CITY CORRESPONDENT

As the monsoon is about to peter out, city roads appear full of pockmarks, thanks to low quality construction and lack of continuous maintenance.

The damaged roads are in Postgola, Juraina, Jatrabari, Sayedabad, Titkatali, Gulistan, Hatkhola, Motijheel, Press Club, and

in front of Shikha Bhaban, Green Road, Khilgaon, Basabo, Gulshan and Sobhabag, among many others.

The roads with potholes cause traffic jams every day and vehicles often get damaged.

DCC Chief Engineer Idris Miah said the zonal authorities have been directed to fill up the potholes with brick chips for the time being so that vehicles are not damaged. Once the rain

ceases, the roads will be carpeted with bitumen, he added.

Urban expert Prof. Nazrul Islam of the department of geography of Dhaka University said roads with flawed construction and not properly maintained, get damaged quickly.

But Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) officials differ with the view and say bituminous roads get damaged if water gets stagnated for a long time.

The DCC chief engineer said bitumen carpet gets damaged if water remains under water for 72 hours.

Prof. Islam pointed out that those properly built roads such as those in the cantonment area and the VIP roads remain intact even after heavy monsoon. He said too much of corruption in road construction lead to poor quality work.

## Another arch bridge for Dhanmondi

### SABRINA KARIM MURSHED

The Dhanmondi Lake is going to get another arch bridge in a year's time although a section of local residents had voiced their concerns about the idea in the past.

The Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) received the instruction from the Prime Minister's Office in August 2003 to build the arch bridge which will connect Dhanmondi's roads 3/A and 4 in an attempt to reduce the traffic congestion in the area.

Accordingly, a tender was floated last year but the successful contractor failed to start work. His earnest money, which was about 2.5 per cent of the total construction cost, was forfeited

because of that failure.

Another tender was floated on May 29 this year and Ashraf and Sons made a successful bid. The fresh tender is awaiting the approval from the chief engineer of LGED. Work could start next month once the green signal arrives.

Earlier this year, the Dhanmondi Poribesh Unnayon Jote (DPUJ) had expressed its apprehensions over the plan for the new bridge. The Jote feared that if it goes ahead, the bridge will further distort the residential character of the area as it will open Dhanmondi to more outside traffic.

However, LGED sources said that they have not heard anything negative from the authorities.

"The DPUJ did not come to us with their problems. We have

heard that they had gone to the Dhaka Urban Transport Project (DUTP)," said an official of LGED adding that some people have told LGED officials that they want the bridge to be constructed on the adjacent road and not on Road 3/A.

"They want to derive the benefits from the bridge but also wish to avoid the little inconveniences related to it," said the official.

He also said that the new bridge would never cause traffic chaos. Rather, it will ease traffic congestion caused by an abnormal increase in population and vehicles in the area. The adjacent roads are widely used by residents of Jigatala, Rayer Bazar and those living on the western part of the lake.

"The severe jam on Road 2 will

be reduced once the bridge is constructed," the official expected.

"The bridge will not allow any heavy vehicles like bus or truck to pass over and only rickshaws and cars will run on it," he said. There will be iron bars in place at a certain height on the bridge to prevent large vehicles from using it.

Tk 2.2 crore has been estimated as the cost for the bridge that is expected to be completed within a year. The bridge will be 35 metres long and 15.80 metres wide. It will have four lanes for vehicles to pass through. A median and footpath will be built on it. The bridge will be propped by 72 piles, each 12.075 meters long and built on a single span.

## Foreign university agents charge for 'free service'

### FAIZUL A TANIM

There is a growing discontent among students and parents about the activities of the majority of local agents of foreign universities and educational institutions that allegedly take fees for services they are expected to provide for free.

Approximately Tk 7,000 is charged as counselling fees at agencies for getting an offer letter from a foreign university at the beginning of the admission process. Once a student gets admitted, the university pays the agency a commission of 5 to 10 percent from the student's tuition fee each semester.

Sources at the British Council said a maximum of Tk 1800 could be taken from a prospective student in processing fees but taking the counselling fees and the commission after successful induction of the student in a university is not proper.

"If an agent is receiving a commission from a university in the UK, then there should be no such thing called a counselling fee. Universities in the United Kingdom have given clear instructions that counselling should be done free of cost," said a top official of British Council.

Students are common victims of fraudulent services as some agencies take a big amount of money from them in the name of visa processing.

Roisul Islam, who is supposed to leave for Australia is anxiously waiting for his visa after giving money to an agency in advance.

"There is one reputed agency in Gulshan 2 which has connections with embassy staff and government high-ups.

They not only promised to bring me an offer letter but also said that I did not have to face the interview at the Australian High Commission. They said the whole process would cost me Tk four lakh. I have advanced Tk 1,50,000 and still haven't seen any progress," said Islam.

British Council officials said that there was no list of agents whose conduct is dubious and who are operating without a valid license and that is why the can not be stopped.

"However, two UK-based universities have opened their regional offices in Dhaka to facilitate students. London Metropolitan University (LMU) has their regional office and Luton University has a liaison office which is supposed to give free admission related service," said Raizah Ripa Wafie, education promotion and marketing manager of the British Council.

But Ahmed Shamim, an A level graduate claimed that while LMU provided free service, Luton University was operating under Alpha-i Consultants Ltd and they were taking between Tk 6,000 to Tk 7,000 at the start of the admission procedure.

"LMU's London office provides all the processing fees for student counselling. This is not the case with Luton. That is the reason why we charge 6,000 Taka. We even stopped receiving commission from Luton per student but we do get a lump sum amount from the university. It does not matter how many students we counsel, the amount remains the same," explained Humayun Kabir Tusser, manager, student affairs Alpha-i.

Local agents advertise themselves as the liaison offices of international universities most of the time and promise to arrange offer letters (letter of acceptance) from the UK, Australia, Canada and other European institutions.

Many of the colleges and universities they advertise of are either non-existent or provide below standard education.

An Australia bound student before departure told this correspondent that just getting there was his main target and that was why he sought the help of the agency and got admitted in a nondescript university.

"My main intention is to go and work there and that is why I chose to study in that college."

"It is very confusing and we do not know which local agent to trust. But the idea of opening up regional or liaison offices of institutions is appreciable. There should be local offices of Australian and Canadian universities too so that agencies can not make money both ways," said Lutful Islam, a guardian on a visit to an education fair.

"We have strict instructions for processing student offers for free of cost. After the launching of the regional office in Dhaka, we are providing the students free counselling and scholarships as well. NCC graduates undertaking LMU courses from Dhaka can transfer credits from here. A brilliant result ensures tuition waivers. Plus three students from Bangladesh completing the under graduate degree of LMU from Dhaka receives 100 percent scholarship for the Masters program in UK," informed K M Mazharul Islam who is the operations manager of LMU's

office in Dhaka.

"A special scholarship for girls has recently started based on the higher secondary school performance in addition to other academic results of the student. Students, who acquire satisfactory result after completing one year in LMU, UK can usually apply for merit scholarships," Islam added.

Both the liaison and the regional offices of the UK based universities in Dhaka suggested visiting the British Council before students go to agents.

"The British Council staff is extremely friendly and helpful to any student who want to inquire about education. Besides, as British Council does not work for any particular institution abroad, we will deliver unbiased views and help the students choose the proper university based on their results," said Raizah Ripa Wafie.

Many students and parents rely on Australian Center for Education (ACE) for authentic counselling about Australian institutions.

Afruza Sultana, a student counsellor of ACE agreed that agents charge too much money. She however had an explanation for that.

"ACE charges Tk 3,500 at the beginning of the process and that is all. If we do not charge anything, too many students, who do not have the qualification to apply, unnecessarily bug us. This not only hampers our prospective students but also creates space problem in our database where we maintain their records. If not for that hassle, it would have been for free."



PHOTO STAR

## usefultelephonenumbers

### OURIER SERVICES

<b>International</b>	9550884
Air Borne Express- 9561371, 9561372, 9550724	Overseas Courier Service- 9552431, 8321169
Air Couriers Int'l (BD) Ltd.- 8815970	Pacific Courier- 9568446
Aramex International Courier- 9558003, 9559582, 9565075	Reliance Express Service- 9558515, 7110249
Airspeed Express- 9563494	Sky International service- 9660442
Asian Courier Services Ltd.- 8313543	Skynet world Wide Express- 9558062, 9560258, 7114787, 7113184
Baishakhi Courier Service- 9558606	TNT Express- 9566662, 9558239, 8618155
Bangladesh Express Co. Ltd.- 9565114	Union Courier Service- 9341722
Bangladesh Courier Service- 9563989	United Parcel Service Air alliance Ltd- 8826429, 8810223
Bengal Express- 9560642, 9552666	
Bangladesh Int'l Courier- 953636	
Continental Service Ltd.- 9552948, 9558425	
DHL Worldwide Express- 9881703-7, 9886305-9, 9882057	
Emen Express- 9330699	
Fedex Bangladesh Express Co. Ltd- 9565114	
Modhuban Courier Service-	



### LIBRARY & INFO-

<b>Libraries, Cultural and Information Centers</b>
Central Public Library- 8626001-4, Shishu Academy- 9564128
Shilpakala Academy- 8614673
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

### OUTING

#### Museum and Zoo

National Museum- 8619396-9

Open: 10 am 5 pm, Friday 3

pm- 8 pm, Thursday closed

Muktijuddha Jadughar-

9559091

Open: 10:30 am 6:30 pm,

Sunday Closed

Bangabandhu Smiti Jadughar-

8110046

Open: 10 am 5 pm, Wednesday

closed

Ahsan Manzil

Open: 10 am 5 pm, Friday: 3

pm - 7 pm, Thursday Closed

Shishu Jadughar- 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-Mahakali-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 chattar- 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-Kalbagh-Rampura-Biswas Road-Tongi Bridge

10 Sadarghat-Gulistan-Kakrail-Malibagh-Rampura-Biswas Road-Tongi Bridge

11 Sayedabad-Motijheel-Fakirapool-Maghbazar-Mohakali-Tongi Bridge

11/A Sayedabad-Khilgoan-Malibagh-Rampura-Airport-Tongi Bridge

12 Shanir Akhra