



The new look to the Central Public Library is eagerly awaited by its frequent visitors.

## Road woes on the Beribadh

FAIZUL A TANIM

Most roads in old Dhaka are in such a deplorable state that residents fear they will become unusable in near future unless repair work is done immediately.

The 'Beribadh' road or the embankment road from Babu Bazar to Shoriya Ghat is a prime example of lack of maintenance. Large potholes resulting from stagnant water and heavy rainfall

and movement of heavy vehicles has left it in a horrendous condition. Accidents are frequent on that stretch of road.

"I have seen at least four to five accidents within the past week," said Abdur Rahman, a local tea stall owner.

Rickshaws often get stuck or turn over after falling into the holes.

Local people said that after the recent heavy downpour, water ate

away the bitumen layers of the roads and made the carpeting slack. Now, when heavy vehicles like trucks and buses pass over, the road gradually disintegrates. Traffic congestion is another common problem. Motor vehicles that needed 15-20 minutes to pass now take more than half an hour.

Easy movement of traffic is extremely important on that particular road as most medical facilities like hospitals, clinics and

medicine shops are located around that area near Mitford gate. There are some ten hospitals and clinics there and in case of emergency, old Dhaka residents rush there.

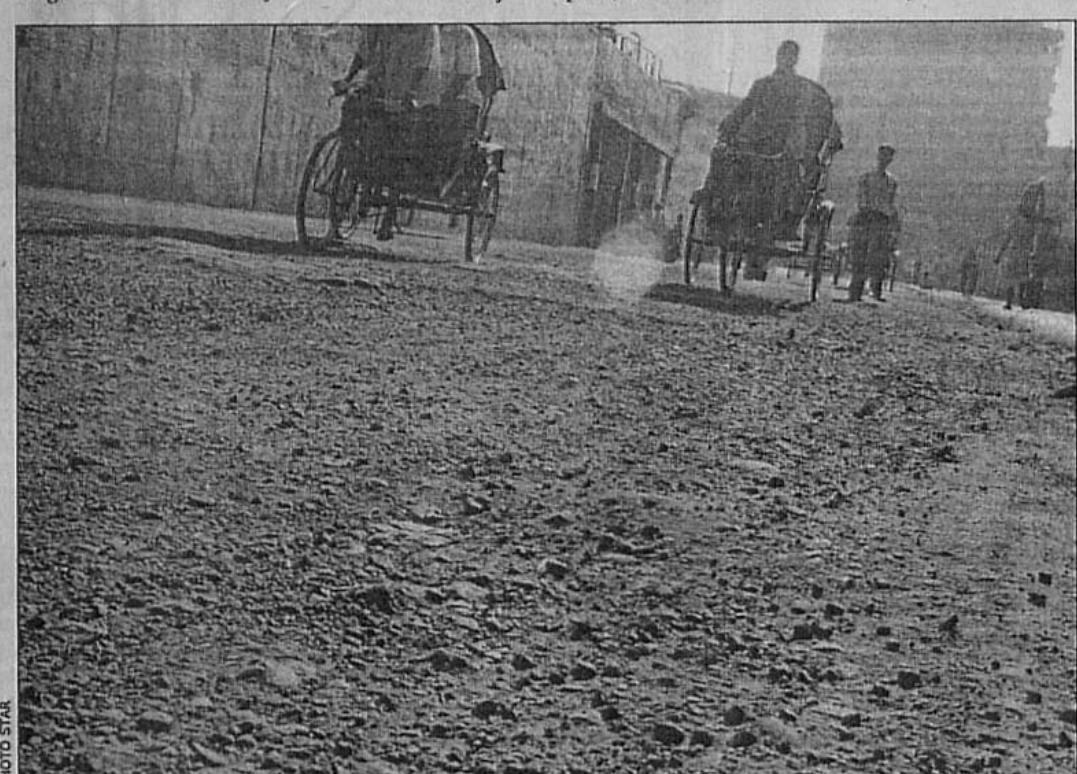
Jahan Ahmed, a medicine shop staff said he has seen an old man die on the road as the ambulance carrying him got stuck in a traffic jam.

Most roads and alleys in Babu Bazar, Noya Bazar, Mitford, Armanitola do not have covers on manholes. Some holes can be found covered with loose bricks and mud with a red cloth tied to a bamboo warning the public of the danger. The residents themselves took these measures as repeated complaints to local ward commissioners fell on deaf ears.

Almost all of these manholes are 20-30 feet deep and pose grave risks for pedestrians and vehicles especially when the roads get submerged after a rain.

The embankment road, which is connected to Ghatoli, is a focal point for business. Businesspersons of old Dhaka said they experience around forty percent loss when it rains. Rain means more traffic jams and goods are damaged and transportation delayed due to accidents. Trucks and lorries get stuck and have to wait in long queues on that damaged road.

Residents and businessmen also complained that truck drivers bribe the traffic police and move freely on the road during daytime which is prohibited by law. This also causes damage to the road and creates traffic chaos.



A stretch of the Noya Bazar road, like many others in Old Dhaka, lies in a dilapidated state causing discomfort to residents of the area.

PHOTO STAR

## Facelift for Central Public Library

KAUSAR ISLAM AYON

Renovation work of the Central Public Library (CPL) is already on.

The library's facelift plan includes building a new seminar room, central air-conditioning of reading areas, setting up of a cyber cafe and installation of close circuit cameras.

The 250-seat new seminar room will be built on the top of the children's corner at a cost of Tk. 40,400.

"The present 80-seat seminar hall is not big enough to hold launching of books, discussion programmes and similar events. Our auditorium on the other hand is too large for those purposes. That is why we are building this new seminar hall which has been a long-standing demand," said assistant director of the public

library Kazi Abdul Majed.

The Central Public Library was built in 1978 and until this year no changes have been made to its structural character.

"The department of architecture has already started preparing a design for the new seminar hall without demolishing any part of the library," added Majed.

He hoped that they would be able to finish the construction by the coming year.

The only library in the country open for 24-hours will become centrally air-conditioned by the end of this fiscal year. 41 split type air conditioners are being installed for the five reading rooms covering 19984 square feet area. The air-conditioning will cost Tk. 94 lakh.

All the old furniture of the reading rooms where 1950 people visit on an average everyday, will be replaced with new ones at an expenditure of Tk. 39 lakh.

"We will send the shelves, chairs, tables to the district libraries after replacing them with new ones by this fiscal year," Majed said.

The cyber cafe will also be established this year in the library's main building.

"The cafe with fifteen computers will provide internet service to users at a cheaper rate than the private cyber cafes," said the assistant director.

The budget for the cyber cafe and computers for administrative use has been estimated at Tk. 37 lakh.

"We have a plan to start computer training for our librarians and also for librarians of other public libraries around the country after the cafe is in place. We will employ a local consultant for this

purpose," Majed added.

He also informed that books worth Tk. 50 lakh will be added to the library by 2005. A committee has already been formed headed by Professor Wakil Ahmed for selecting of books.

"The committee has been working from May this year and it has already decided in principle to buy 70 percent of books from the local publishers, while the rest will be bought from international publishers," said Majed.

Thirteen close circuit cameras have already been set up in the library for security purpose.

The library's interior will also go through a change.

"We have a budget of Tk. 18,88,000 Thousand for the interior designing of the library compound and the main auditorium," Majed informed.

## Lack of funds restrains education of orphans

Future of 300 children from CHT at stake

PORIMOL PALMA

Dearth of financiers have deprived the poor and orphaned children at Shakyamuni Bouddha Vihara at Mirpur of primary education, a scenario that has been going on for the last five years.

Around 300 Buddhist children from the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) were housed and given primary education at Bonophool Children's Home in the Bouddha Vihara since 1993, but the school activities went into oblivion in 1998 as the French donor agency 'Partaz' stopped providing finances.

The donor agency referred to the 1997 CHT Peace Treaty and said the government could finance the education programmes for Bonophool Children Home, said Dhanamoni Chakma, organising secretary of Parbatya Bouddha Sangha, Bangladesh (PBSB).

"The CHT Affairs Ministry said that as the school does not fall within the CHT purview, the ministry is not in a position to fund the school," said Venerable Prajnananda Mahathera, president PBSB.

Jnana Bikash Chakma, PBSB's general secretary told The Daily Star that Bimal Trishwa Bhikku, the then president of PBSB helped to acquire one-acre land in two phases. The first 22 decimals was obtained in 1976 during



the regime of Ziaur Rahman and the rest in 1985 during the rule of HM Ershad, to promote the Buddhist practices, education and development.

The PBSB constructed a Pagoda and building on the land with aid from many sources

capacitating the education of about 400 students.

The general secretary said the entire building remained unused with bills of over Tk 5 lakh including fines and interest pending for electricity, gas water and other utilities.

"The building is now a burden on us as we are facing severe a monetary crisis," Dhanamoni said. He urged authorities to take adequate steps to provide financial aid to enable PBSB to run the institute for the benefit underprivileged children.

PHOTO STAR

## useful telephone numbers

### COURIER SERVICES



### LIBRARY & INFO



### CITY BUS ROUTE



#### Libraries, Cultural and Information Centers

Central Public Library- 8626001-4, Shishu Academy- 9564128  
Shilpkala 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

#### TIPS

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

#### Museum and Zoo

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

#### 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-Kalbagan-Shyamoli-Mirpur 1, 10, 11, 12  
10 Sadarghat-Gulistan-Kakrail-Malibagh-Rampura-Biswa Road-Tongi Bridge  
11 Sayedabad-Motijheel-Fakirapool-Maghbazar-Mohakhal-Tongi Bridge  
11/A Sayedabad-Khilgoan-Malibagh-Rampura-Airport-Tongi Bridge  
12 Shanir Akhra-Shahbagh-Farmgate-Asadgate-Mohammedpur  
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-Mohakhal-Airport-Uttara-Bipole

#### Starts from

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