



PHOTO STAR

A new improved Banga Bazaar

CITY CORRESPONDENT

Bongo Bazar, the popular market where customers belonging to all the spheres of the society flock to shop, is shifting to new complexes in Gulistan and should be operating in full swing soon, according to sources in the Dhaka City Corporation (DCC).

The Bongo Bazar is basically a combination of four neighboring markets namely Bongo Bazar Hawkers' Market, Gulistan Municipal Hawkers' Market, Mohanagar Hawkers' Market and Adarsha Hawkers' Market which house some 2,275 tin-shed shops in an area of 60-katha. It came into being in 1989 following the demolishing of the makeshift hawkers' markets in Gulistan, which had been a popular destination for second hand clothes since the 60s.

The new complexes have been named Sundarbans Hawkers' Market and Bongo Bazar Hawkers' Market complex and all the shops of four markets will be relocated there.

Construction of the four-storied Sundarbans Hawkers' Market is already complete and 116 shops of Mahanagar Hawkers Market and 115 of Adarsha Hawkers' Market have become operational there. With a capacity to house at least 978 shops of 80 square feet each, this market has an underground parking lot and provisions for elevators and escalators.

The new Bongo Bazar Hawkers' Market is nearing completion. It will have 1,236 shops of 80 square feet each and over 40 percent service area. There will be a sky roof, escalators and elevators.

Bongo Bazar's attraction stems

from the variety of clothing it offers to customers at a much cheaper price than anywhere else in the city. Even expatriates and travelers who are aware of its existence, never miss the chance to visit the place. From sweaters, tights, jackets, trousers, shirts, skirts, shorts, saree, lungis and every type of garment you can think of, locally made shoes and undergarments are also a big draw for customers at Bongo Bazar.

The huge chunk of surplus supply from local garment industries usually make their way to Bongo Bazar and businessmen here have also started bringing in Japanese, Chinese and Korean items.

AHM Taslim Uddin, Vice-President of Bongo Bazar Hawkers' Market shop owners association claimed that it was the biggest wholesale market for local

shoes and saree.

"I do not mind shopping here although the place can be claustrophobic at times. Besides, this is where my pocket permits me to shop at will," said Tonmoy Mojumder, a student of Dhaka University.

Traders of Bongo Bazar can afford to sell their goods at a comparatively lower price as they have to pay a monthly rent of only Tk five per square feet. They said that the rent would remain the same even after they move to the new complexes which should come as music to the ears of the customers as it means the prices are unlikely to go up.

Shop owners are hoping to do better business once they move to the new complexes as improved facilities and space is expected to attract more customers.

Housing plan for govt employees curtailed

KAUSAR ISLAM AYON

The housing and public works ministry has reduced the number of flats for sales to government employees in hire-purchase schemes from 500 to 360, sources said.

Ministry officials said the allocated funds could not bear the cost of 500 flats as the cost of raw material shot up. The price of a flat fixed at Tk 11.40 lakh on average increased to Tk 14.84 lakh.

"The government is supposed to fund the five-year project. We were supposed to receive Tk 22 crore last year from the government but received only Tk 8 crore," a project official said.

The Executive Committee of National Economic Council (Ecne) in a meeting on September 8 asked the authorities to complete the work in time, but the rest of the fund was not transferred.

"We have applied to the finance ministry through the housing ministry for a special allotment but we are not sure whether we will get it in time," he said.

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But the budget was revised by the project committee and increased to Tk 57 crore before the project was approved at the Ecne meeting in April 1998.

"We could not cut the budget although we reduced the number of flats. We are adding lifts, tiles and mosaic to all apartments, which were not initially included in the proposal," another official said.

With the reduction in flat numbers, only 8 percent government employees will get the accommodation. Those who draw 40 percent of the basic pay in house rent have to stay in rented houses, according to the arrangement.

The project committee allocated 200 flats by lottery although there were 1,800 applicants, sources said, adding it will take time to hand over the flats to the winners, on hopes some could take over the flats by December.

"We wrote the housing ministry for permission to go ahead with the second lottery to distribute the other 160 flats. This may not be possible by December as we did not hear back from the ministry," the official said.

Whether or not the project will receive all funds to meet the June 2005 deadline remains unanswered.

Beggars pester commuters at intersections

FAIZULA TANIM

Putrefied hands of beggars coming through a car's window or an autorickshaw door imploring passengers for money at every traffic signal has become a common experience of commuters going to workplace or returning home.

Wearing dirty and torn clothes, some of these beggars are blind, some limp with no arms or legs and totally handicapped, strolled by another person. They are seen begging everyday at the busy city intersections.

Displaying X-ray or medical reports are few of the ways they use to draw attention of the commuters. Some of them have genuine reasons to beg but some deceive people pretending to be a handicapped or making appeals in crooked voice.

The city has some 370 intersections, almost all of them including Sonargaon Hotel, Saarc fountain circle, Gulshan 1 & 2 circle, Sheraton, Motijheel and Baitul Mukarram are full of beggars standing in distinct gestures to beg money.

Abdul Quddus, a beggar at Sonargaon signal says his hand got cut off in a train accident. He was a construction labourer but after the accident, he found no option but to beg on the streets. This has been his profession for the past two or three years.

Most of the beggars say they had either lost job or had been very low paid while working. But a bulk of them admitted that their daily income from begging is more than the amount that can be earned by working 8 to 12 hours a day in a factory.

The beggars at a Motijheel intersection said the office time in the morning and after 2pm when the schools close are the prime times for begging. Usually people from the passing cars refuse to give money after dusk due to security problems.

"You won't feel good early in the morning as you start a fresh day when you see

dirty hands of beggars coming through your car's window. It's a total nuisance on the street," said Anisur Rahman, a businessman, stuck in a tailback at Saarc fountain circle.

Traffic congestion keeps on building as the beggars would desperately keep their hands inside the cars even when the traffic signals turn green. Sometimes a beggar's hand gets stuck in the car window or a car wheel moves over their feet.

Some beggars apply innovative techniques to earn more from begging. There are some women who hire babies from slums on payment to convince the commuters, as they think the strategy is quite fruitful to draw sympathy of people.

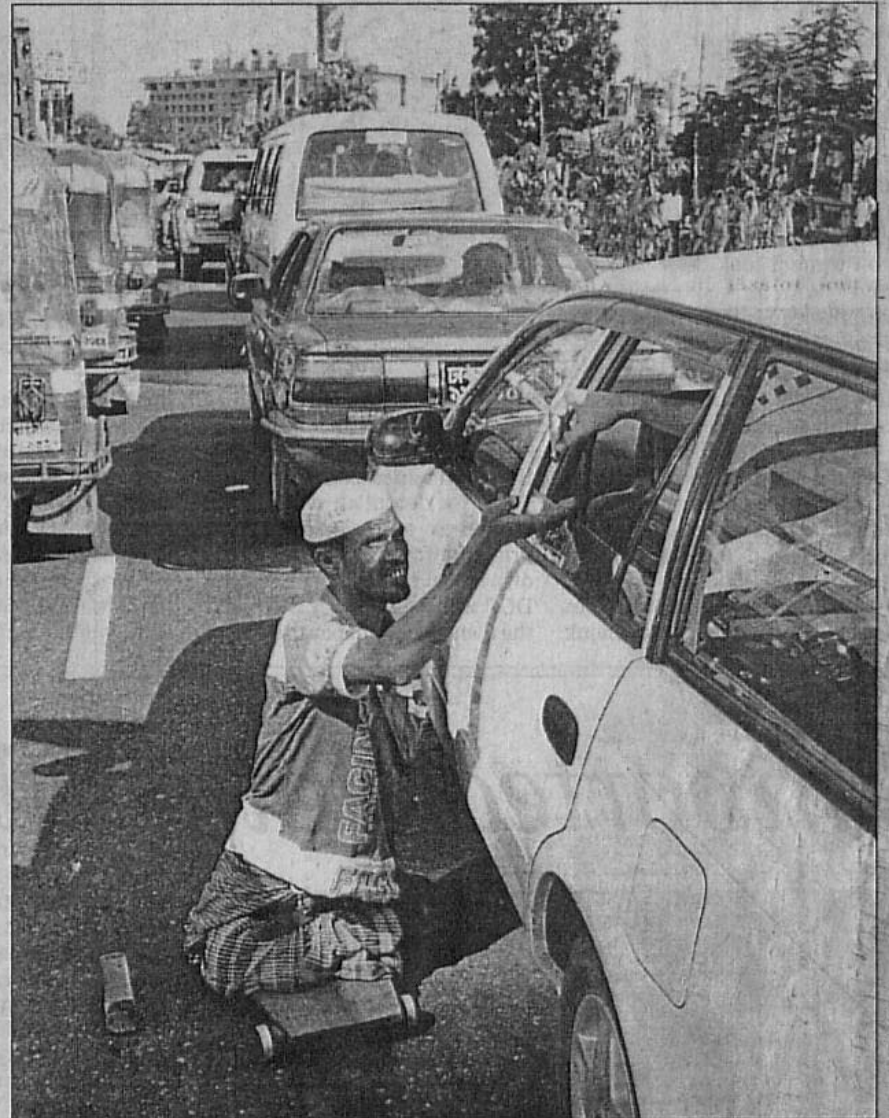
Sazzad Ahmed, a traffic constable at Bangla Motor crossing, said the beggars disrupt traffic control at the VIP road intersections most as the movement of vehicles there gets stalled by at least 30 to 40 seconds for these beggars.

Asked why the police allow the beggars to pester the commuters on busy roads, Second Officer of Ramna Police Station Rezaul Hossain said sometimes they pick them up from the VIP roads and send them to Mirpur vagrant centre.

"When we see beggars creating nuisance, we rush and catch them," police sergeant Nizam said at Sonargaon intersection. "But it is not possible for us to constantly keep watch on them as we need to look at the traffic situation," he added.

Not only the beggars, streets urchins hawking flowers, books, candies, maps, bottled water also irritate the passengers got stuck in traffic signal or congestion.

"Even if you do not want to buy these, they will keep on pestering you until you agree," said Mahmud Rahman, who works as an executive in a garment factory.



Beggars at various intersections are a common sight, and this limbless one on a wheeled-cart is seen begging for his livelihood at Panthapath.

useful telephone numbers

COURIER 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
Bangladesh 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- 9600442
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

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 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 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	Starts from
1	Gulistan-Shahbagh-Banglamotor-Farmgate-Mirpur 10, 11, 12	Golap Shah Mazar
2	Gulistan-Shahbagh-Banglamotor-Farmgate-Mirpur 1, 2	Phoolbaria bus station
3	Gulistan-Shahbagh-Farmgate-Mahakhalai-Airport-Azampur	Phoolbaria bus station
4	Shyampur-Motijheel-Shahbagh-Farmgate-Airport-Tongi	Shyampur
5	Sayedabad-Kamalapur-Motijheel-Airport-Joydebpur-Gazipur	Sayedabad
6A	Kamalapur-Motijheel-Gulistan-Shahbagh-Farmgate-Gulshan 1, 2	Kamalapur
6B	Kamalapur-Motijheel-Gulistan-Maghbazar-Nabisco-Gulshan 1, 2	Kamalapur
6C	Motijheel Shapla chattr- Malibagh- Farmgate- Gulshan 2	Motijheel Shaplachattr
7	Sadarghat-Gulistan-Maghbazar-Nabisco-Gulshan 2	Sadarghat
8	Chittagong-Motijheel-Shahbagh-Farmgate-Asad Gate-Kalyanpur-Gabtol	Chittagong Road
9	Demra Rani mahal-Motijheel-Kalbagan-Shyamoli-Mirpur 1, 10, 11, 12	Demra Ranimahar
10	Sadarghat-Gulistan-Kakrail-Malibagh-Rampura-Biswa Road-Tongi Bridge	Sadarghat
11	Sayedabad-Motijheel-Fakirapool-Maghbazar-Mohakhali-Tongi Bridge	Sayedabad
11/A	Sayedabad-Khilgoan-Malibagh-Rampura-Airport-Tongi Bridge	Sayedabad
12	Shanir Akhra-Shahbagh-Farmgate-Asadgate-Mohammadpur	Shanir Akhra
13	Motijheel-Shahbagh-New Market-Jhigatola-Shangkar-Mohammadpur	Motijheel
14	Signboard -Motijheel-Shahbagh-New Market-Shyamoli-Mirpur 1, 12	Signboard (Chittagong Road)
15	Chittagong Road-Motijheel-Shahbagh-Farmgate-Mirpur 12	Chittagong Road
24	Gulistan-Maghbazar-Mohakhali-Airport-Uttara-Bipile	Gulistan