

Ward libraries far from deadline

SABRINA KARIM MURSHED

Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) is unlikely to meet its deadline for establishing a public library at each ward under it by February 2005.

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia last year ordered establishment of public libraries in all the 90 DCC wards to encourage people to read. However, only ten libraries have been set up so far.

Sources said a decision had been taken at a meeting held at the Prime Minister's Office to have all the libraries operational by next February. However, the DCC informed in the next meeting held on August 30 that setting up the libraries in 32 wards had to be deferred due to the recent flood in the city.

DCC insiders however said that at present the project is limping because of paucity of space, lack of infrastructure and fund crisis. DCC officials also said that the project was not entirely their responsibility as the Corporation was only asked to provide space for the libraries.

Initially it was planned that the libraries would be set up in the community centers owned by the

DCC insiders said that presently the project is limping because of paucity of space and funds. Officials also said the project was not entirely their responsibility as the Corporation was only asked to provide space for the libraries

DCC. But it has only 38 community centers.

"So it was later decided that the libraries will be in any DCC office that is able to provide room for it or on any place owned by the DCC," said a concerned DCC official.

He said the local commissioners and zonal officers have been told to propose the probable location of the libraries.

"We have already received 60 such proposals from them but all of them are not suitable as they are private properties," said the official.

Ward commissioners were also

asked to convince local elites to donate furniture for the library but that bid failed too.

"We can not hold them responsible for being unable to convince people. It is not their mandatory job. Moreover, it is only natural that people might feel disinterested in investing in libraries as there will be no output for them," the official added.

DCC sources said that there was no permanent fund flow for the project. "We have two employees at each library and it becomes hard when there is no fund to pay their salaries," said an official.

The Department of Public

Library under the Ministry of Cultural Affairs sanctioned an allocation of Tk one lakh each for five libraries last year. Since then no funds have been made available for the project, informed a DCC official.

The Central Public Library has already provided books worth Tk 20,000 for each library as a start.

Four among the ten libraries that have become operational have been set up inside DCC-owned community centers -- Islambag Community Centre, Shahidnagar Community Centre, Paltan Community Centre and Mogbazar Community Centre. The rest are Suchana Community Centre Public Library at Ring Road in Mohammedpur, Shahid Commissioner Raju Memorial Library, Koshaituli Public Library, Shayesta Khan Help Centre Library, Nazira Bazar Physical Centre Library and the library inside the commissioner's office of ward 74.

"At least 15 people turn up to read everyday," said one project official. The libraries have not started a membership system yet and visitors are not allowed to take books outside.



PHOTO STAR



With an overwhelming abundance of vegetables in the wake of winter, prices have drastically reduced.

Veggie depression over

MANISHA GANGOPADHYAY

The usual post-Eid drop in prices of vegetables is happening once again with the advent of winter.

The ample supply and low price are a far cry from the abnormal situation in the vegetable market during Ramadan.

In a matter of weeks, the shortage of winter vegetables caused by monsoon floods in India and Bangladesh have been forgotten with many different varieties, some of which were unavailable or outrageously costly just over a month ago, swamping the kitchen markets.

The drop in the price of the eggplant, which had inspired many news headlines during the Ramadan for its exorbitant

price, is most remarkable. It is selling at five times lower than the Tk 80 per kg before Eid.

The price of cucumbers has also come down to around Tk 10 from Tk 40.

The declining prices of staples such as onions and spinach have provided much relief to the people from all walks of life.

Vegetable customers have long waited for the winter specialties whose presence in the markets was sparing. The near-empty counters, baskets and sacks offering few options like wilted coriander or shrivelled cucumbers are thankfully over for this year.

"We are relishing the prospect of buying sweet potatoes and beans, which were virtually non-existent in the markets before Eid. We do not have to eat raw or bruised

tomatoes

anymore," said Moni, a regular shopper at the Karwan Bazar Kitchen Market.

Cauliflower, coriander, radish, turnips, ladyfingers and cabbages are among the myriad of varieties of vegetable bountifully offered at kitchen markets of the city at over half their prices from the previous week.

Sellers from all corners of Dhaka have confirmed the abundance of all kinds of vegetables.

"Everything is available in large quantities now," said a vegetable seller in Hatirpul. The variety of spinach present in the market is a testament to that. Heaping piles of lal shak, palong shak, mula shak have made their debut appearance this week.

TASTE TURKISH TREATS

A six-day show titled 'Turkish Food and Cultural Festival', organised by Hotel Sonargaon, began in the city on Wednesday. Embassy of Turkey in Dhaka and Qatar Airways are the sponsors and co-sponsors of the festival. The festival that has attracted food connoisseurs to the authentic taste of Turkish kebab, cheese and bread concludes today.



STED ZAKIR HOSSAIN

useful telephone numbers

COURIER SERVICES

International
Air Borne Express- 9561371, 9561372, 9550724
Air Couriers Int'l (BD) Ltd.- 8815970
Aramex International Courier- 9558003, 9559582, 9555075
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
Bengal Express Int'l Courier- 953636
Continental Service Ltd.- 9552948, 9558425
DHL Worldwide Express- 9881703-7, 9886305-9, 9882057
Enern 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

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-Mahakhali-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 Ranimahal
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	Syedabad
12	Shanir Akhra-Shahbagh-Farmgate-Asadgate-Mohammadpur	Shanir Akhra
13	Motijheel-Shahbagh-New Market-Jhigatola-Shangkar-Mohammedpur	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