

# Three major waterway landing stations open next month

AVIK SANWAR RAHMAN

The three major landing stations of the circular waterway project at Gabtoli, Aminbazar and Ashulia will be opened for navigation on February 14.

"We have been informed that the shipping minister will formally inaugurate the major landing station at Ashulia on February 14," said Abul Kashem, project director of the circular waterway project of Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority (BIWTA).

The project was supposed to be completed by 2004 but the deadline had to be extended due to delay in acquiring land.

The circular waterway project has four major landing stations at Swarighat, Gabtoli, Aminbazar and Ashulia. The major landing stations include two pontoons, two steel gangways, one terminal building, one transit shed and a planned connecting road with other

major landing stations.

According to BIWTA sources, river commuters and cargo vessels are already using one major and four minor landing stations.

Construction of pontoons, steel gangways and passenger guestrooms at the four minor landing stations at Kholamora, Basila Shinnir Tek and Biruliabazar have been completed.

Minor landing stations at Shinnir Tek near Mirpur zoo and at Biruliabazar opposite to Uttara under phase three of the project were now complete, informed the superintendent engineer of BIWTA.

Two RCC staircases and toll stations at Nawabganj and Rayerbazar for the benefit of the local boat traffic are also ready.

The first phase of the Circular waterway project costing Tk 36 crore has covered Buriganga and Turag rivers, comprising a 29.5 km area from Sadarghat to

Ashulia. "Dredging has been done on 17 km of the waterways so far," added the Project Director.

River dredging gets priority in the project as 60 per cent of the total budget has been allocated for that purpose. 25 per cent of the funds was for land acquisition while the rest would go to construction of landing facilities from Swarighat to Ashulia.

"We now have to dredge up to 500 feet at landing stations although originally we had planned for 120 feet," said Kashem.

The Executive Committee of National Economic Council (Eneec) had approved the Tk 36 crore for the first phase of the project on September 3, 2003 as the project hit a deadlock because of lack of funds.

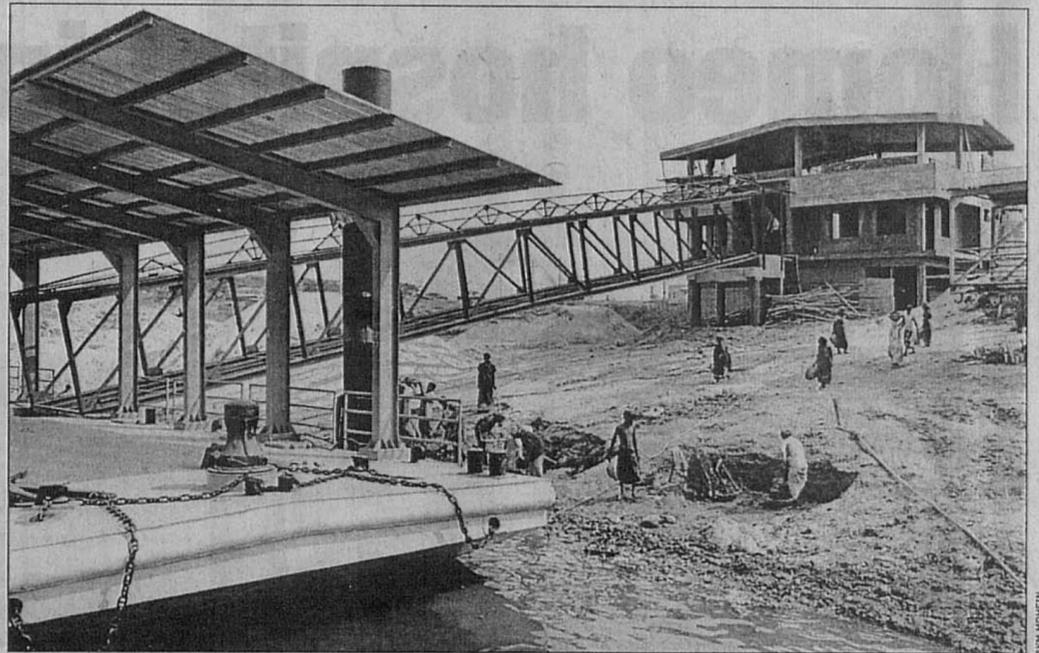
The Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Corporation (BIWTC) is supposed to introduce waterbuses and watertaxis for

the commuters on Buriganga and Turag waterways in June this year under the project.

The second phase of the circular waterway project is scheduled to start from July 2005 which will add Balu and Shitalkhya rivers in a bid to encircle the city with waterways.

"The project concept paper of the second phase will be placed at the next Annual Development Planning meeting within this month," said Kashem.

Currently more than 128 lakh commuters travel on waterways in the city and thousands of tons of cargo, building materials and livestock move through the rivers. The circular waterway would reduce the traffic jam of the city. Navigation and dredging would bring flow to rivers which would boost fisheries as polluted water would not remain stagnant.



The Gabtoli landing station is almost ready to be launched on February 14.



## Janata Tower to get a facelift soon

KAUSAR ISLAM AYON

Janata Tower, the infamous 11-storey building in Karwan Bazar that has remained abandoned for the last four years, is soon to get a facelift for setting up government offices in the building, officials of the public works ministry said.

In the year 2000, the government acquired the building after the High Court convicted former military ruler HM Ershad in a corruption case involving himself and his wife, Raushan Ershad, regarding purchase of this land.

When the building came under the government ownership, its construction was yet to complete. After the acquisition, the work came to halt. Soon squatting families started living in the building making it a high-rise slum.

About two years ago, the government evicted the squatters to free the building and allotted space for a Public Works Department office. But no steps have been taken to make the building usable completing rest of the construction work.

Housing and Public Works Minister Mirza Abbas however told Star City that they are going

to make the building usable as soon as possible.

"We have requested the finance ministry for funds to complete the rest of the construction work. The law ministry also has agreed to provide some funds in exchange for spaces for its offices," said Abbas.

"The law ministry will be given four floors and the rest to other ministries which are facing shortage of office space," the minister said.

Abbas said they would require about Tk 14 crore to build four more levels in the building as per its original design. "But if the structure is just refurbished in its present height, the cost would be around Tk 5 crore."

The facelift of Janata Tower however will not solve its problems. The DCC uses the roads in front of the building for dumping garbage of Karwan Bazar.

To start business in such a modern building the ministry will first have to find an alternative rubbish dumping site in Karwan Bazar, the largest wholesale vegetable market in the country that generates about 250 tones of rubbish everyday.

## JU campus still features nature's tranquility

BSS, Savar

Hundreds of nature-lovers through the Jahangirnagar University featured with the twittering of birds to inhale fresh air and mitigate the monotony of everyday life.

Visitors, young and old, along with their families spend time here to satisfy their thirst with the magical touch of nature's tranquillity.

Students and professionals gather here either on picnics or study tours and to mingle with the panoramic atmosphere, while writers and photographers believe that the scenic beauties prompt them with ideas for their work.

Of the total 697 acres of uneven land of the campus, 200 acres are

covered with 20 large and small lakes and ponds -- the safe haven for birds and animals. The lakes in front of the administration building and the lakes beside the Jahanara Imam and Pritilata Halls are where birds flutter around.

The lakes have become a paradise especially for migratory birds escaping from the Siberian and Himalayan cold.

The JU family is keen to uphold its heritage by preserving its natural resources, and the authorities imposed restrictions on hunting and disturbing birds and animals on the campus.

A Wildlife Rescue Centre (WRC), the first of its kind has been established on the campus with its own

funds to preserve and protect endangered species of wildlife from around the country and conduct research on their habits, breeding and genetics. The centre has already sheltered three endangered species of mammals, 50 species of butterflies, 10 species of reptiles and four species of amphibians in their natural atmosphere.

A colourful fair, displaying domestic and guest birds is organised every year on the campus, attracting large numbers of visitors.

Experts and students believe the JU campus can be turned into an attractive tourist spot by making it safe for migratory birds and by preserving its splendour and resources.



## healthouting, taxicab & train timing

HEALTH	MARKET CLOSED	TAXI CAB	LIBRARY & INFO	
<b>Hospitals</b> <b>Heart</b> National Institute of Cardio Vascular Diseases (NICVD), - 9130800, 9122560-59 <b>Burn</b> Dhaka Medical College Hospital Burn Unit-8626812-5 <b>Cancer</b> National Cancer Institute-8014914, 8826561-65 Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University-8612550-4, 861455-9 <b>Diabetes</b> Diabetic Research Hospital (IRDDEM)- 9661551-5, 8616641-50 <b>Mother &amp; Child Care</b> Shishu Hospital- 9119119, 8116061-62 Azampur Mother & Child Health	Training Institute- 8624827, 8624980 <b>Eye</b> Islamia Eye Hospital-9110794, 9119315 National Eye Hospital- 8117202, 8114807 <b>Dental</b> Dental College -9002035 <b>Orthopaedics</b> National Orthopaedics (Pangu) Hospital- 9114075, 9112150 <b>General</b> Dhaka Medical College Hospital- 8626812-6 Rushmono General Hospital- 8317819 Holy Family Hospital- 83111731-25 Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University Hospital- 8612550-4, 8614545-9 Bangladesh Medical College & Hospital- 8115443, 9118202,	Gulshan 1, 2 markets-Friday Elephant Road-Friday Bishal Center-Friday Baitual 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-Thursdays Ahsan Manzil-Thursdays. New Market-Tuesday Gausia Market-Tuesday Mouchak Market-Sunday Dhanmondi Hawkers Market-Tuesday Dhanmondi Hawkers Market-Tuesday Eastern Plaza-Sunday Farmview Super Market-Sunday Muktiuddha Jadughar-Sunday Dhaka Zoo-Sunday Shishu Jadughar-Sunday	<b>Yellow Cab</b> Navana 9558065 Safida 9344477, 0171620881 Cosmo 9112959 and 8127191 Cab One 7113282-3 Nihon 8624741-2 Orion 9347277 Anudip 8125285 and 8127611 Capital 9352847 <b>Union</b> 8130485 Kool 0171826731 <b>Black Cab</b> Cab Ex 9358401 Cabline 8321162 JBS Cab 019364575 Sajon 018126036 Anudip -- 8125285 and 8127611 Cab One 7113282-3 Palki 0171052500 Cab I 7113282 Jatri 0171540074 Nipun 9572277 R-Cab 8914782 Star Cab 9571919 Shihab 018202477 & 018228675 KGN 8620011	<b>Libraries, Cultural and Information Centers</b> Central Public Library- 8626001-4, Shishu Academy- 9564128 Shilpakala Academy- 8614673 Bangla Academy- 8619550 Islamic Foundation- 9550280, 9556407 Nazrul Institute- 9114602 Ford Foundation- 8116133 Alliance Francaise- 8611557 Information Resource Centre, The American Center - 8813440-4, 9886395-9 British Council- 8618867-8, 8618905-7 Community Development Library- 8113769, 8113604 Goethe Institute Int'l- Dhaka- 9126525-6 Indian Information Centre & Cultural Library- 8850141-2 The Russian Cultural Centre- 9116314, 9118531, 9118314 Drik Photo Gallery- 9120125, 8112954, 8123412 Press Institute of Bangladesh (PIB) 9330081-4