

# T&T connection made 'easy'

SULTANA RAHMAN

Nobody knows how long it could take to get a fixed line telephone connection of Bangladesh Telegraph and Telephone Board (BTTB) under the normal process. But if you take the help of brokers, you can have your connection in no time it seems.

It is alleged that some corrupt senior officials and a section of class four employees of the T&T Board have formed a pact with the brokers who are very active around the telephone exchanges.

Jahangir Alam of New Elephant Road submitted his application for a fixed line phone on November 15, 2003. The application along with the demand note now lies with the Elephant Road camp under Nilkhet Telephone exchange. Sub assistant engineer of the camp Karim Khan claimed that they could not provide Alam with the connection due to a lack cable networking capacity.

But Alam might have been better served if he had taken a different approach.

The moment a prospective applicant steps inside the Gulistan Telephone Exchange, a number of people will surround him and inform him about the 'easier way' to get a telephone connection and that too within a

**The moment a prospective applicant steps inside the Gulistan Telephone Exchange, a number of people will surround him and inform him about the 'easier way' to get a telephone connection and that too within a short period.**

short period.

"Three people were walking with me telling me that they could manage everything including the demand note," said Mozibul Haque.

Ignoring them, Haque went to the submission booth. To submit a prayer, subscribers need to pay Tk 100 in pay-order with the application form. The man inside the booth asked for Tk 120.

"He said that for the extra 20 Taka, he was going to arrange the pay-order for me and I would not have to go to the bank for it. He thought he was helping the applicants by taking the extra money," said Haque.

"After submitting the application form, I was asked to get in touch after three months. The man who received the form offered me another option if I wanted the phone line immedi-

ately. He said he could help me get the demand note issued sooner if I paid him Tk 2000," said Haque who was not interested in the proposal and prepared to wait. Seven months later he was asked to contact the Nilkhet Telephone Exchange as the demand note was sent there.

"Last November I went to the Nilkhet exchange and at the entrance two people came up to me and said that they can get the telephone connected to my home in two days," said Haque who again preferred to follow the legitimate process.

"The divisional engineer of that exchange told me to talk to the people at the Elephant Road camp after one month. Almost every day I either call the camp or go there but I have not received my connection yet," said Haque.

Divisional engineer of Nilkhet exchange Md Shajahan Ali Mollah admitted the existence of brokers. "A number of these brokers have more influence than actual employees," said Mollah.

He also said that the cable networking capacity of Nilkhet area has not been increased as per the demand. "The brokers take this opportunity as demand for fixed line phones is very high in this area."

Mollah informed that the capacity of the Nilkhet exchange was around 41,000 while it already had 40,000 subscribers. "This exchange is over-loaded if you compare it to other exchanges," said Mollah.

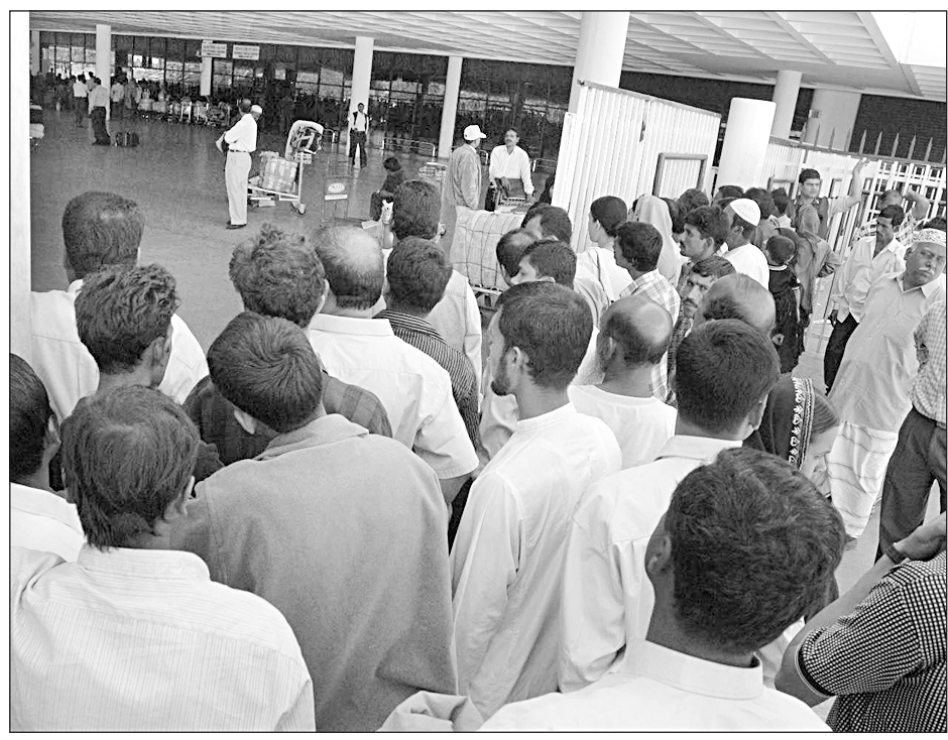
At present the T&T Board is proving service to around 4.5 lakh subscribers in Dhaka city through nearly a hundred camps under 19 telephone exchanges.



A mixture of staff and brokers gather around the Gulistan TNT office.

# Airport visitors agitated at lack of info screen

The information centre too does not provide exact flight information, alleged passengers and visitors



Crowds, relatives and friends, wait impatiently at the exit point of the airport till their passenger arrives, (left) while others inside the arrival lounge concourse hall peer through the glass (right).

SYED TASHFIN CHOWDHURY

Monirul was flying off to Dubai. All at home were excited. Jasimuddin, his older brother together with their 80-year old father and two young cousins, who had never seen the Zia International Airport, travelled all the way from Netrakona to see Monirul take off in an aircraft.

Their enthusiasm was soon stifled and simmered as they pushed and pulled their way through the crowds and witnessed the confusion at the airport.

The flight, scheduled to take off at 10:00 AM, was delayed and Jasim made every effort to find out how long the delay would be and when exactly the craft would take off. He made inquiries at the 'Information Centre' and waited.

To his utter amazement and disappointment, he found that the 'information' he had received from the 'Information centre' had not been correct. He realised this after a never-ending waiting of over five hours inside the departure lounge, where he entered with his brother. Taka 250 each for three more persons to enter the concourse hall, weighed a little too much on his purse, so the others his old father and cousins had to wait outside in the open.

"I was worried wondering how they managed to wait outside in the heat and pushing their way through the crowds for such a long time," said Jasim talking to the Star City.

Zia International Airport's lack of proper screens displaying schedules of arrivals and departures, changes and delays, entrance and exit gate numbers and any other necessary flight information, cause much inconvenience and discomfort to thousands of people going in and out of the airport.

International and domestic airports around the world have display screens installed at various points inside and out of the buildings at locations where passengers and visitors are able to have a clear view of all flight information. Apart from the unavailability of display screens at ZIA, the announcements are inaudible as well.

Since its inception in early 1980, ZIA underwent a lot of renovations but installation of digital screens at important locations have long been absent from its list of projects.

Although there are a few display screens in the departure lounge, they are sparingly found in the concourse hall and none outside at a distance where waiting visitors can find out what is really going on. Off the few screens in the departure lounge, a large number of them require repairs, complain most passengers.

Without such information, lower-middle class and those who come to ZIA from remote areas to receive a passenger wait over three to eight hours outside, under whatever weather conditions. And for those with financial constraints, like in Jasim's case, most people wait outside without information of a flight departure.

The payment of an entry fee of Tk 50 for a person to enter the arrival lounge concourse hall to wait till relatives or the 'close one' lands, restricts most visitors from entering the waiting area.

As such, most of these visitors wait outside further adding to the huge mass of confusion.

"It took me over 15 minutes to figure out whatever was displayed on one of the screens as it was too dark," said Khalil, a visitor who had come to see a relative fly off.

Relatives as well as travellers, also suffer because of malpractice of airport personnel on duty at the 'Announcement Centre'.

Although announcements should be made free for all visitors, these personnel still ask for *bakhshish* (tips) for each announcement made.

According to visitors to the airport, the personnel bank on whatever they can get out of the visitors.

"I saw an officer on duty taking five Riyals from a passenger, who had just arrived from Dubai and needed to have an announcement made to locate his relatives who were waiting outside the building," said Runu, a member of the ZIA Cab Owners and Drivers Association.

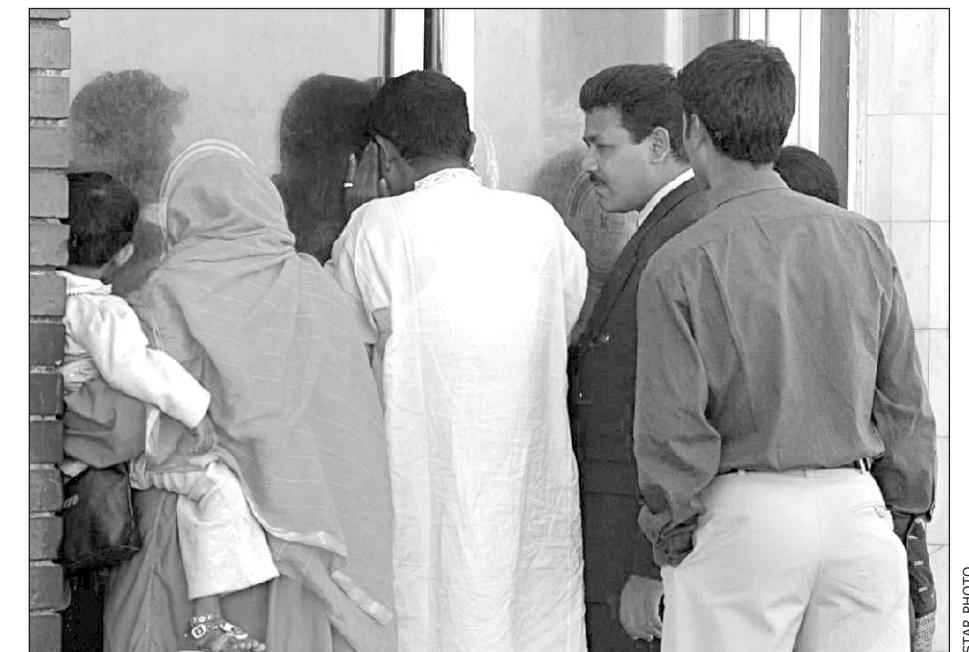
On the other hand, a few visitors alleged that on-duty officers at the information center

are reluctant to provide information.

Lighting, too, around the airport needs improvement and the problems seem to be increasing each day.

ZIA's Director, Wing Commander Humayun Kabir is hopeful of the improvements that will take place soon. "We will install digital display screens flashing accurate information within two months at important points of the airport. We hope this step will facilitate the needs of many that come here," he said.

The prominent spots marked for the installation of these screens will include the concourse halls, departure, arrival, VIP, VVIP lounges and in the customs area.



## useful telephonenumber numbers

OURIER SERVICES	LIBRARY & INFO	OUTING	CITY BUS ROUTE																																																														
<p><b>International</b> 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 Banmgladesh 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-</p>	<p>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</p> <p><b>National</b> 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</p>	<p>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</p>	<p><b>Libraries, Cultural and Information Centers</b></p> <p><b>Central Public Library-</b> 8626001-4, <b>Shishu Academy-</b> 9564128 <b>Shipakala Academy-</b> 8614673 <b>Bangla Academy-</b> 8619550 <b>Islamic Foundation-</b> 9550280, 955640 <b>The American Centre (IRC)-</b> 8813440-4, 9886395 <b>The Nazrul Institute-</b> 9114602 <b>Ford Foundation-</b> 8116133 <b>Alliance Francaise-</b> 8611557 <b>British Council-</b> 8618867-8, 8618905-7 <b>Community Development Library-</b> 8113769, 8113604 <b>Goethe Institute Int'l- Dhaka-</b> 9126525-6 <b>Indian Information Centre &amp; Cultural Library-</b> 8850141, 8850142 <b>The Russian Cultural Centre-</b> 9116314, 9118531, 9118314 <b>Drik Photo Gallery-</b> 9120125, 8112954, 8123412</p>	<p><b>Museum and Zoo</b></p> <p><b>National Museum-</b> 8619396-9 Open: 10 am - 5 pm, Friday 3 pm - 8 pm, Thursday closed <b>Muktijuddha Jadughar-</b> 9559091 Open: 10:30 am - 6:30 pm, Sunday Closed <b>Bangabandhu Smiti Jadughar-</b> 8110046 Open: 10 am - 5 pm, Wednesday closed <b>Ahsan Manzil</b> Open: 10 am - 5 pm, Friday: 3 pm - 7 pm, Thursday Closed <b>Shishu Jadughar-</b> 9666466 Open: 10 am - 6 pm, Sunday Closed</p>	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Bus No.</th> <th>Route</th> <th>Starts from</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1</td> <td>Gulistan-Shahbagh-Banglamotor-Farmgate-Mirpur 10, 11, 12</td> <td>Golap Shah Mazar</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2</td> <td>Gulistan-Shahbagh-Banglamotor-Farmgate-Mirpur 1, 2</td> <td>Phoolbaria bus station</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3</td> <td>Gulistan-Shahbagh-Farmgate-Mahakhali-Airport-Azampur</td> <td>Phoolbaria bus station</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4</td> <td>Shyampur-Motijheel-Shahbagh-Farmgate-Airport-Tongi</td> <td>Shyampur</td> </tr> <tr> <td>5</td> <td>Sayedabad-Kamalapur-Motijheel-Airport-Joydebpur-Gazipur</td> <td>Sayedabad</td> </tr> <tr> <td>6A</td> <td>Kamalapur-Motijheel-Gulistan-Shahbagh-Farmgate-Gulshan 1, 2</td> <td>Kamalapur</td> </tr> <tr> <td>6B</td> <td>Kamalapur-Motijheel-Gulistan-Maghbazar-Nabisco-Gulshan 1, 2</td> <td>Kamalapur</td> </tr> <tr> <td>6C</td> <td>Motijheel Shapla chattr- Malibagh- Farmgate- Gulshan 2</td> <td>Motijheel Shaplachattr</td> </tr> <tr> <td>7</td> <td>Sadarghat-Gulistan-Maghbazar-Nabisco-Gulshan 2</td> <td>Sadarghat</td> </tr> <tr> <td>8</td> <td>Chittagong-Motijheel-Shahbagh-Farmgate-Asad Gate-Kalyanpur-Gabtoil</td> <td>Chittagong Road</td> </tr> <tr> <td>9</td> <td>Demra Rani mahal-Motijheel-Kalbagan-Shyamoli-Mirpur 1, 10, 11, 12</td> <td>Demra Ranimahal</td> </tr> <tr> <td>10</td> <td>Sadarghat-Gulistan-Kakrail-Malibagh-Rampura-Biswa Road-Tongi Bridge</td> <td>Sadarghat</td> </tr> <tr> <td>11</td> <td>Sayedabad-Motijheel-Fakirapool-Maghbazar-Mohakhali-Tongi Bridge</td> <td>Sayedabad</td> </tr> <tr> <td>11/A</td> <td>Sayedabad-Khligoan-Malibagh-Rampura-Airport-Tongi Bridge</td> <td>Syedabad</td> </tr> <tr> <td>12</td> <td>Shanir Akhra-Shahbagh-Farmgate-Asadgate-Mohammadpur</td> <td>Shanir Akhra</td> </tr> <tr> <td>13</td> <td>Motijheel-Shahbagh-New Market-Jhigatola-Shangkar-Mohammedpur</td> <td>Motijheel</td> </tr> <tr> <td>14</td> <td>Signboard - Motijheel-Shahbagh-New Market-Shyamoli-Mirpur 1, 12</td> <td>Signboard (Chittagong Road)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>15</td> <td>Chittagong Road-Motijheel-Shahbagh-Farmgate-Mirpur 12</td> <td>Chittagong Road</td> </tr> <tr> <td>24</td> <td>Gulistan-Maghbazar-Mohakhali-Airport-Uttara-Bipile</td> <td>Gulistan</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	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-Gabtoil	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-Khligoan-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
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**TIPS**  
Do you know according to Dhaka City Corporation, you must deposit your waste at the collection site between