

Shantinagar traders join hands to fight crime

SYED TASHFIN CHOWDHURY

Traders of Shantinagar Kitchen Market are preparing to wage a war against criminals who have been responsible for extortion, mugging and drug peddling in the area over the last few years.

"Illegal activities occur on a regular basis here and the police do very little to apprehend criminals," said a member of the Aminbagh Cooperative Society Limited.

The latest victim of extortion was Humayun Kabir, a chicken trader of Shantinagar market. Miscreants beat him up and snatched over Tk 50,000 from his cash box on the night of February 9. The attackers also reportedly tried to kill Humayun but other traders who heard his screams for help, rushed to the aid of a profusely bleeding Humayun who was rushed to a hospital.

A case was later lodged with the Motijheel police station accusing some known criminals of the area Mizan, Ratan, Jahangir, Mojibur, Dulal, Rubel, Shawkat, Sharif, Md. Ali and a few others for the attack on Humayun.

The incident infuriated other businessmen of the market. The traders called a three-hour strike on February 10 and also surrounded the Motijheel police station to put pressure on the police to take action against the criminals.

Police arrested Sharif, Dulal, Md. Ali and Mojibur but they were soon out of custody on bail. The alleged leaders of the criminal gang Mizan and Ratan meanwhile, were still at large.

Mizan, known as 'Freedom Mizan' had reportedly been a top muscleman of a political party. Even though he had been expelled from that party, he has continued to make a living out of extortion.

Ratan was released from jail a couple of weeks ago and allegedly runs a number of drug gangs and mugging groups in the city.

Both of them have numerous cases filed against them for murder and attempted murder.

Shoppers of the market and residents of Shantinagar have often been mugged by hoodlums belonging to the criminal gang. The muggers usually lurk in the alleys and streets between Malibagh intersection and Razmoni Cinema Hall.

One Nazma and her husband Taju, who are also part of the gang, sell Phensidyl in the area usually during night.

"They were caught a number of times by the police, but they always bribe their way out of custody," said a resident of Shantinagar. Some traders alleged that Mizan, Ratan, Nazma, Taju, Dulal and others had connection with high officials

of the Police force and influential political leaders.

Fed up with gangs harassing and threatening them, local residents and business people of the market have decided to form their own resistance.

"We will soon initiate a Committee to resist terrorism in the area," said Khondoker Abdur Rob, commissioner of Ward 36.

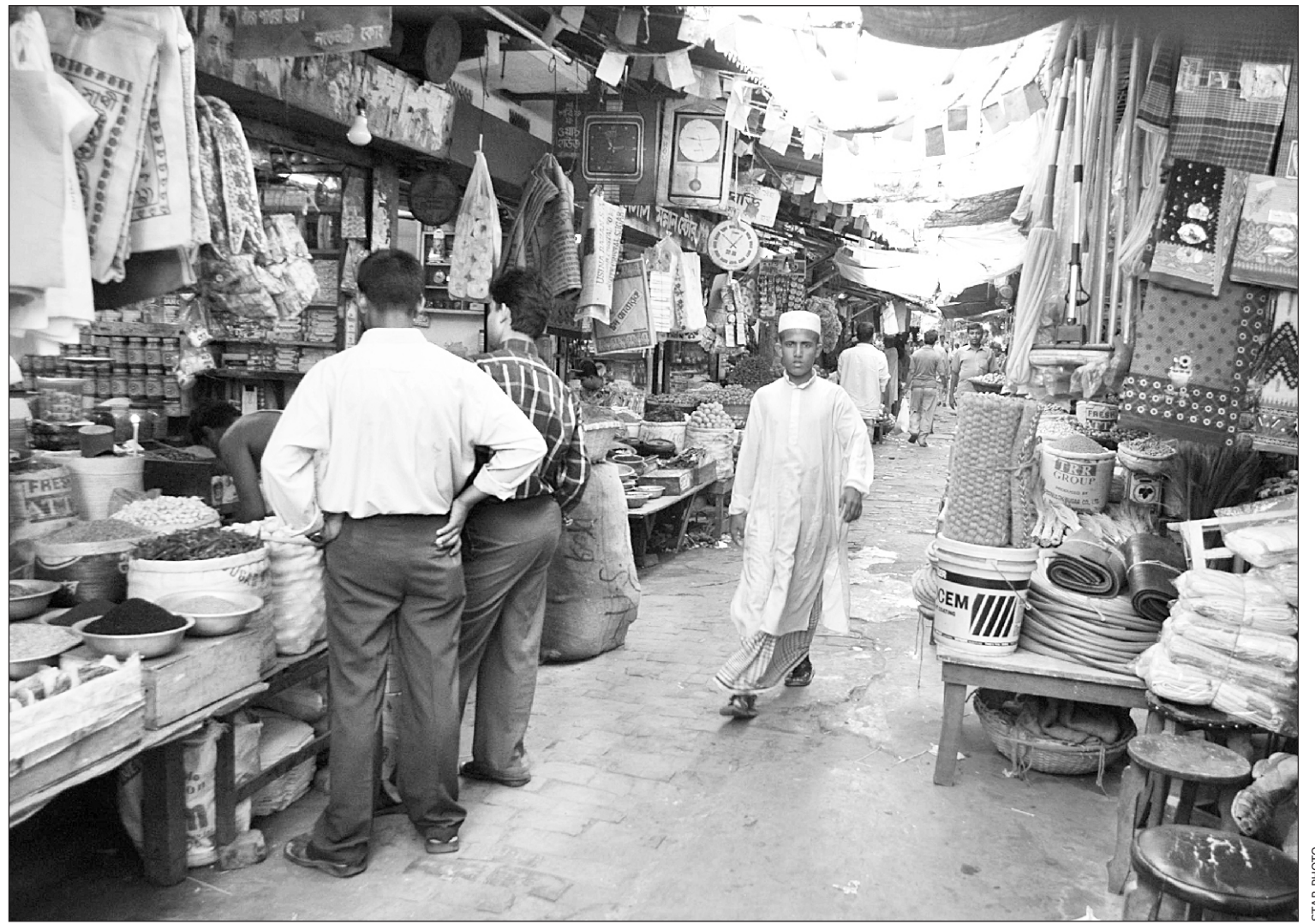
The commissioner has already asked for written permission from the police and local authorities to set up this resistance committee.

But the criminals have not yet given up either. The plaintiff Humayun Kabir and other members of the co-operative society have complained of receiving death threats on phone from the group.

Even though extortion is nothing new at the Shantinagar Kitchen Market, members of the cooperative society believe that the present gang is the most daring.

"They took at least Tk 10,000 from the vegetable sellers and the amount increases as the businesses become more profitable" said a member of the cooperative society.

The extortion money was collected by a person named Ibrahim who has gone missing after the incident.



The Shantinagar bazar traders are now ready to wage war to protect the area.

DCC's supermarket plan delayed



This DCC Market at Nilkhet is set to be replaced with a multi-storey one.

SULTANA RAHMAN

The Dhaka City Corporation (DCC)'s plan of constructing six multistoried supermarkets is being delayed as the government has introduced a new infrastructure guidelines under which the plan will require approval from the Prime Ministers Office (PMO).

The markets, which will be 10-20 storeys, will be constructed in different areas. But the plan has already run into controversy. The DCC has failed to collect revenue from its existing markets. Moreover, already burdened with the mushrooming shopping centres, the capital is in no position to accommodate more high-rises which will only result in more traffic congestion.

"The plan is at its final stage as the DCC has already issued letter of acceptance to selected private companies under a mutual agreement," said Syed Mozaffar Hossain, executive engineer of DCC's Bazar Circle.

"We do not have to invest money in constructing these markets. The private firms will build them by taking down the old markets. The DCC will own 40 to 60 per cent of these markets," he added.

DCC wants to construct six multistoried supermarkets demolishing the existing structures at

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Gulshan 1 and 2 circles, Banani DCC market, Mirpur Circle10, Nilkhet and Ramna.

"All these markets were built in the 60s by the then DIT. Now they are in a bad shape and some have already been declared unfit," said MA Momen, chief executive officer of DCC.

"The DCC-owned markets are less modern compared to private shopping centres. That is why our markets should be modernised to survive the competition."

The proposed new DCC markets at Gulshan 1 and 2 will be 20-storeyed ones. They are waiting the clearance from the Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh

(CAAB). Two proposed 13-15 storeyed markets at Banani and Mirpur have already been approved by the CAAB.

The DCC owns 105 markets including 36 supermarkets in the city. For long it has been alleged that the DCC does not have any control on rent collection from at least twelve of these supermarkets.

Nagar Bhaban sources said that every month the DCC is deprived of around seven lakh Taka in revenue from these markets. At present, about 50 court injunctions are preventing the DCC to collect rents. Some of these injunctions have remained

in force since 1984.

"We do not understand why the DCC is interested in building more markets when it can not even collect revenue from many of the existing markets," said a member of the New Market committee.

The government's new guidelines recommend sending the construction proposal to the PMO.

"If the project is short listed by the PMO, then it will send it to the cabinet division for evaluation. After the proposal gets the cabinet's nod it will be eligible for implementation," explained Moazzfar. He also said that there were no scopes for re-tender as it has already been awarded.

useful telephonenumber numbers

OURIER 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
Banladesh 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- 9660442
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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
Sundaran 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- 8850141, 8850142
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 Jadugarh- 9559091
Open: 10:30 am 6:30 pm, Sunday Closed
Bangabandhu Smiti Jadugarh- 8110046
Open: 10 am 5 pm, Wednesday closed
Ahsan Manzil
Open: 10 am 5 pm, Friday: 3 pm - 7 pm, Thursday Closed
Shishu Jadugarh- 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-Gabtoil	Chittagong Road
9	Demra Rani mahal-Motijheel-Kalbagan-Shyamoli-Mirpur 1, 10, 11, 12	Demra Ranimahal
10	Sadarghat-Gulistan-Kakrail-Mailbagh-Rampura-Biswa Road-Tongi Bridge	Sadarghat
11	Sayedabad-Motijheel-Fakirapool-Maghbazar-Mohakhali-Tongi Bridge	Sayedabad
11/A	Sayedabad-Khligoan-Mailbagh-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