

Litter bins arrive

KAUSAR ISLAM AYON

... With the goal to keep the capital neat and clean Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) in association with a private organisation named Nodi Enterprise (NE) has taken an initiative to bring conservancy service within the reach of the city dwellers.

Nodi Enterprise will set up 2000 litter bins each with 20kg waste containing capacity. The three square feet bins made of GI sheet will be fixed to the light posts beside the roads.

Some 500 bins have already been installed under the first phase of the project. These litter bins will be opened for public use by the end of this month. The remaining 1500 will be in place by next month.

"We are putting our litter bins in pedestrian-dominated areas where littering problem has been identified, VIP roads and other areas in need," said Abdullah Al Mamun, managing director of Nodi Enterprise.

The organisation will also be responsible for the maintenance and cleaning of these

bins.

Workers of Nodi Enterprise will collect the litter from the bins and dump it in the nearest DCC garbage container.

"Cleaning the bins once a day would be sufficient. We are ready with our own manpower to clean them even twice a day if necessary," said Mamun.

The DCC has also leased out their light posts to the NE to facilitate the project. The organisation will bear all expenses for installation and maintenance and will be allowed to display advertisements on the bins. However, DCC monograms will be there too on the bins.

"The DCC does not have to spend anything in this project," said Sohel Faruque, chief conservancy officer of DCC.

The DCC had taken a similar initiative last year but the project failed due to lack of maintenance. At that time they had set up 200 such bins which were either stolen or got damaged. But following a proposal from Nodi Enterprise, the project had been revived.

NE has placed the first 500

New litter bins have been installed in the city, but to the amazement of all concerned, the bins have already been covered with various political posters, concealing the instructions inscribed in them for their proper use.



bins beside the roads from Baridhara Bridge to Kakoli via Kamal Atartuk Avenue, from the Gulshan 2 intersection to



Tejgaon Link Road via Gulshan 1 and from Banani Chairmanbari to Press club via Farmgate. NE officials said that

they have a plan to provide the whole city with such bins if this project proved successful. Both the DCC and Nodi

Enterprise will soon launch an awareness campaign aimed at motivating the public to use the litter bins.

Flyover will still benefit Khilgaon residents, says minister

CITY CORRESPONDENT

... Minister for Housing and Public Works Mirza Abbas said Khilgaon residents would not be deprived of the use of flyover, as claimed by former LGRD state minister Saber Hossain Chowdhury.

The minister in a press conference yesterday clarified that people in the Khilgaon area can easily use the road below the flyover now eased of traffic congestion. "In addition, if anyone wants to use the flyover to Motijheel, it can be done on the BTTB side and get off at the Bashabo landing on the DIT road," he said.

Abbas commented that he is said to have been politically connected with the flyover project, which is not true. Blaming the former state minister for agitating the local people, he said that Saber is nothing but 'jealous'. "If Saber says that the flyover could be constructed within 22 months, why did not he do it while he

was in power for five years," he said.

State Minister for Local Government Rural Development (LGRD) Ziaul Haque Zia termed the allegation of cancellation of a loop construction as 'wrong'. He said the idea of the loop existed in the initial lay out

submitted by the contractors. "But when the 'working drawing' was prepared, it was clear that construction of a landing towards the east from the Khilgaon rail intersection was not possible because of dense population," he said.

He said that the construction of the loop was also not

possible at the Sayedabad end, as it needed a minimum land acquisition of 30 feet in width and 500 feet in length at the east and west ends.

However, the minister said if Saber Hossain Chowdhury could provide an appropriate design and persuade the locals of Khilgaon to evacuate the necessary land, the loop can then be constructed.

"Saber does not understand that the entire Khilgaon area will have to be evacuated if a landing is constructed on the east-side," he said.

The LGRD State Minister termed the Awami League claim of allocating funds twice under Annual Development Project (ADP) during their regime as "untrue".

Tk two crores were allocated in 2000-2001, but was released on June 25, 2001, just five days before the fiscal year end. He said the present government made the entire funding from January 15, 2002.

The minister said the Awami League government only thought of the project and finally laid the foundation stone. "We turned their dream to reality," he said.

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The Khilgaon Flyover is now the controversial talk of the town.



'Friday market' for city hawkers

SULTANA RAHMAN

... Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) is planning to introduce 'Friday market' for hawkers who will use a particular footpath on a particular day to run their business.

"The plan has come from the mayor. He asked the officials to conduct a feasibility study," said Abu Taleb, chief estate officer of DCC.

Citing examples of Western countries, Taleb said the corporation would allow the street vendors to use different footpaths in particular days to keep the other pavements free.

As per the initial plan, some footpaths including Gulistan, Manik Mia Avenue and Mirpur Road will be designated for hawkers for a fixed day in the week so that the pedestrians

can avoid that particular road on that particular day.

"The idea is -- for example, we will designate Gulistan for hawkers on Sunday, Manik Mian Avenue on Friday and Mirpur Road on Saturday. But before implementing the idea, it needs an intensive study," Taleb said.

Due to lack of convenient place, hawkers in the city keep most of DCC's 200 kilometers footpaths occupied creating trouble for the pedestrians. These poor vendors offer cheapest merchandises for low-income people.

"We have hardly any space to walk on the footpath which is always occupied by the vendors and buyers," said a pedestrian near New Market. "We are compelled to walk on the main road as the footpaths are

blocked."

The DCC and police often conduct routine drives to free the footpaths from hawkers but they come back soon after every eviction attempt.

"Eviction of hawkers has become a farce. This is not a permanent solution. We must think an alternative way to free the footpaths," Taleb said.

He hoped that if they could introduced 'Friday market' it would not only help the hawkers but also reduce pedestrians' hazards.

According to Bangladesh Sammilita Footpath Hawkers Parishad (BSFHP) -- an association of hawkers, around 15 lakh hawkers are in business in the city who have no other alternative place to do their business.

Asked if the 'Friday market'

would help them, Mustofa, a hawker said, "It will disrupt our business as we will not get enough customers."

He said that now the consumers know what type of goods are available in which footpaths. "If the authorities introduce the system the customers will have to remember the day when the temporary market will sit on which road," he argued.

However, many street vendors are hopeful about the success of the Friday market plan. They believe it may restrict their presence everywhere but will ensure their livelihood.

Sazzad, a hawker at Dhanmondi, said if they get a fixed place they will be able to run their business safely and it will reduce the fear of eviction and harassment by the police.



city express

The latest crop of quotes from the city's press -- words worth repeating, we feel, for their humour, insight or sheer outrageousness. Star City does not necessarily support the opinions expressed in this column.

"Not only the flyovers, we plan to construct an elevated expressway and underground railway to improve the communication system in Dhaka. Flyovers are part of that plan"

-- Khaleda Zia
Prime Minister

Stated at the inauguration of the country's second and longest Flyover at Khilgaon road-rail intersection, on March 23.
Source: Prothom Alo



"In the past, student politics was based on merit, but unfortunately now it has become polluted"

-- Dr Khandaker
Mosharraf Hossain
Health and Family Welfare Minister

Said at a prize giving ceremony at East West University auditorium in the city, on March 24.
Source: The Daily Star

"When criminals are being killed in encounters, human-rights organisations speak out. But when policemen get killed by them (criminals), no one speaks about human rights"

-- Lutfozzaman Babar
State Minister for Home Affairs

Told a function organised in the city to celebrate one year the Rapid Action Battalion's operations, on March 26.
Source: The Daily Star

"A conspiracy is on to root out indigenous people. The 45 ethnic groups need a strong national political party to fight for their rights"



-- Jyotirindra Bodhipriya
Larma
popularly known as Shantu Larma
Chairman, CHT Regional Council

Told a conference on 'Emerging issues of indigenous people in Bangladesh' organised by the National Adivasi Coordination Committee, Bangladesh Adivasi Forum and Hill Tracts NGO Forum in association with the Nijera Kori, an NGO on March 24.
Source: Prothom Alo

"They said they would give me electric shock or bury me alive...I feel like I have just come out of hell"

-- Shaibal Saha Partha

Accused of threatening Sheikh Hasina by sending e-mail.
Told journalists narrating a harrowing tale of torture on his release, seven months into his arrest allegedly for e-mailing a threat to kill Awami League president and leader of the opposition, on March 23.
Source: The Daily Star