

## Elevated road over Hatirjheel awaits Ecneec nod

SULTANA RAHMAN

Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) has completed all preparations to construct an elevated road over Hatirjheel, one of the city's biggest water bodies, aiming to ensure speedy communication between the city's eastern and western parts.

Nagar Bhaban sources said the project involving Tk 530 crore is now awaiting approval from the Ecneec (Executive Committee of National Economic Council). If the project is approved, the construction work may start next winter.

This will be the first elevated road in the country. "It will be an international standard elevated roadway in respect of smooth traffic movement avoiding congestion on Tongi Diversion Road and Moghbazar," said Project Director Ashiqur Rahman.

The road will have the option to extend in future to meet increased traffic volume. It will have four lanes, walkways on both sides and median. The road will connect Panthapath with Gulshan Avenue and

Pragati Sarani at Rampura. "The proposed east-west corridor will ensure uninterrupted traffic flow between the eastern and western part of the city," Ashiqur said.

After getting approval, DCC will invite international tender for the construction

this year and end in June 2008. But it was delayed as the project was revised to save the water body and environment.

"DCC has prepared a new project concept paper for constructing the road following the technical assessment by Buet to

series of stories about the consequence of filling up the waterbody.

"The proposed road is essential to ease city's ever increasing traffic congestion as the city lacks east-west road link," said Saifuddin Ahmed, chief executive officer of DCC.

As there is no straight road from Panthapath to Rampura the commuters have to go to Mohakhali and Gulshan areas via Moghbazar, Malibagh and Mouchak that takes a long time and causes huge traffic congestion on that road.

Urban Planning Department of Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (Buet) after conducting a survey of the area suggested constructing the elevated road for the sake of saving the water body.

The project director said they have already got clearances from all departments concerned including the Department of Environment, Dhaka Transport Coordination Board, Water and Sewerage Authority (Wasa) and Rajdhani Unnayan Karttripakkha (Rajuk).

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of the elevated road from Tongi Diversion Road to Rampura.

Sources said the road will cost around Tk 530.34 crore of which Tk 110 crore is for land acquisition.

According to the original project proposal, construction of the road was supposed to start from March

save the city's last remaining water body and environment," Ashiqur Rahman said.

The decision to build the elevated road has come after a yearlong discussion as environmentalists stood against a plan for filling up Hatirjheel for constructing a road. Star City also ran a



Work on the elevated road over Hatirjheel water body may begin next winter.



Typists in Osmani Udyan still strive to continue the profession they are familiar with.

## Professional typists struggle to survive

FAIZUL KHAN TANIM

As computer is easily available everywhere, the typists in Osmani Udyan are struggling to survive in the adverse situation.

Around 20 typists are now engaged in typing customers' documents such as applications, certificates and bio-data charging a very small amount of money.

Before the advent of computer, more than 50 typists used to sit under the typists' shed in Osmani Udyan. In the last few years, the number reduced to 20.

Many typists left the profession, which is increasingly becoming unprofitable.

Those who are still in the business want to use computers but the open place is unsuitable for using computers, they said.

However, a number of typists already in their 50s or 60s do not want to leave

the typewriters as they think it will not be easy to adopt computer technology.

The typists have been doing their business at the place, just opposite to the Police Headquarters, since the Pakistan period.

They normally use the old machines except a few who have bought electronic typewriters. They can type documents in both Bangla and English language.

The typists' shed is now in a dilapidated condition due to lack of maintenance, said Md Nurunnabi, 60, who has been doing business there for several decades.

The typists say they have applied to the Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) to renovate that shed using glass to make it suitable for use of computers and install a collapsible gate or shutters for security purpose.

If it is done, may be they can bring computers and start using them. But DCC is

not permitting this, as the shed is just opposite to the Police Headquarters.

DCC authorities told them that due to security reasons they will not allow any permanent structure at the place.

President of the Typist Welfare Association Kamaluddin Khan however said, "If the authorities do not let us build a permanent business centre here, the government can allot space for us near Golap Shah Mazar."

"If we get such a space, we will shift to that place," he added.

"We have been working in this place for a long time -- much before the establishment of the Police Headquarters there," said Secretary of the association Amir Hossain.

## Govt to give security support package for garment industry

BDNEWS, Dhaka

The Ministry of Home Affairs announced yesterday that it would give its fullest support to the country's garment export industry in ensuring uninterrupted business activities in factories and security of the workers.

The ministry's support will include a special police cell in every district to combat illegal toll collection and restrict jhut (wastage) gatherers; a strong police highway patrol to ensure no snatching of truckloads of imported raw materials especially on Dhaka - Chittagong

route and strengthen the capacity of Chittagong Metropolitan Police.

Police patrol will be tight between 5-15 of every month in particular, so those garment workers can carry their earnings home safely and the Officer in charge (OC) of respective police stations will be held responsible for any untold incidents.

State Minister for Home Affairs, Lutfozzaman Babar announced these measures at a "discussion on law and order" with garment exporters at the Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) in the city. The BGMEA is the country's

largest trade body with more than 4,000 members.

The announcement came after local garment exporters led by association president Annisul Haq apprised the state minister of problems of "silent extortion" in factories and adjoining areas especially in Dhaka, Chittagong and Narayanganj and snatching of truckloads of imported raw materials on Dhaka-Chittagong highway.

Babar was accompanied to the meeting by heads of law enforcement agencies including the Rapid Action Battalion (Rab), Police, Special Branch (SB), Ansar, Bangladesh Rifles (BDR). He said: "steps will be

taken because of the government's priority and commitment to give all facilities to private entrepreneurs."

About the highway police the state minister said that a total of 72 police stations would be set up shortly to cover 4,000 km of the country's highways.

"There will be a police station within a range of 40 kilometers on the Dhaka-Chittagong highway. The authorities are well aware of missing of truckloads of imported raw materials," he said.

Leaders of country's largest trade body BGMEA -- agreed to assist the home ministry in the steps that would be implemented and thanked the state

minister for his support.

Inspector general of Police (IGP) Hadisuddin Ahmed, additional IGP Md Abdul Quayum,

director general (DG) of Rab Anwarul Iqbal, Additional DG, Rab Colonel Chowdhury Fazul Bari, Ansar DG Major General M Akbar, BDR DG Jahangir Alam Chowdhury, Deputy IGP Dhaka range Farrukh Ahmed Chowdhury and Additional Police Commissioner DMP Farook Ahmed represented the government while Anwarul Alam Chowdhury, Shadul Islam, Faisal Samad -- BGMEA vice-presidents other members and directors of the board represented the garment industry.

## Restaurants see chicken slump

KAUSAR ISLAM AYON

Restaurants and eateries of the city have seen a slump in orders for items made of chicken following the sensational revelation of syndicated dead fowl business last month.

"The customers hesitate to order chicken curry, chicken biryani and chicken tikka. These items have been replaced by orders for beef and mutton," said Ali Akkas of Meridian restaurant at Moghbazar.

He informed that previously he used to buy around two hundred chickens every day but that number has almost come down by a half.

Arif, who runs a canteen in Karwan Bazar said he now brings live chicken and slaughters them inside the canteen.

"Chicken is the most preferred item in our canteen so I bring them alive and show the office guards before slaughtering them as customers have become skeptic since a man was caught with a bagful of dead fowl in

Mirpur," said Arif.

Surprisingly, the dead chicken scandal has not had too much of a negative impact on chicken business.

"For the last one and half months the price has remained stable although it should have been raised as the price of chicks have seen a 200 percent rise recently. But that was not possible because of this incident," said Abu Bakkar Siddique, a chicken trader in Karwan Bazar.

Sources said at least five to six hundreds chickens die everyday at wholesale markets of the city and many people collect the dead chickens and sell them.

"Some young people collect dead chicken on behalf of the traders who operate behind the scene. Once the chicken collection is over, they sell them to the suppliers," said Abul Kader, a wholesale trader in Tejgaon.

But since the Mirpur incident, the people involved in dead fowl trade have gone into hiding, said sources.

"Some slum dwellers buy dead chicken consciously. But



This eatery in Islampur Road in Old Dhaka awaits midday meal customers.

the rest are now thrown into the garbage," said a trader.

Government officials said that there were no ways to detect a

dead chicken once it had been cooked.

"We are helpless unless the traders stop this business out of

moral and religious considerations," said a food inspector of Dhaka City Corporation.