Begum Bazar mosque was built by Murshid Quli Khan in 1700-1704 AD. The mosque was also known as Kortolob Khan's mosque one of Murshid Quli Khan's other names. This is one of the important mosques built in Dhaka during the Mughal period.

Traders start leaving Karwan Bazar

Kitchen, wholesale and other markets to count loss of crores of taka as they will have to keep their shutters down for four days because of Saarc Summit

Most traders in the city's busiest kitchen and wholesale markets at Karwan Bazar have already stopped their business and started leaving the city as the authorities ordered a four-day shutdown of the markets from tomorrow for the security of the Saarc Summit.

"As we will have no business from November 10 to 13, majority of the wholesalers have already started leaving the city," said Abul Khayer Bhuiyan, chairman of Karwan Bazar based Adarsha Fruit

Sources said the traders and labourers will have to face severe problem during the shutdown that will stop their daily earning.

Besides the kitchen market, there are the biggest wholesale fish and vegetable markets in Karwan Bazar. There are also separate markets for rice, cloths, electronic goods, wood, hardware, household appliances and poultry.

Sources in different trade associations based in Karwan Bazar said the wholesale markets see a daily business of around Tk 600

About 5,000 labourers and rickshaw-van drivers work in Karwan Bazar market, each of them earns Tk 150 to Tk 200 a day. four days," said Md Ali, a rickshaw-

"The closure of the market will spell a disaster for my family," said Shamsul Islam, a labourer who has

to maintain a five-member family. Ismail Ali Wahab, organising secretary of Karwan Bazar DIT

Market Businessmen Welfare "We will have no work for those Association, said, "The government has not yet made any alternative arrangement for us to continue our business during the shut-

> The traders said the market's closure will severely affect middle and low-income groups and restaurant owners who regularly buy

groceries from this market.

"If this market remains closed for even a day, we will have to buy fish, vegetables and spices from other markets at higher prices," said a vegetable seller at Rampura kitchen market who always buy commodities from Karwan Bazar.

Kazi Faruk, general secretary of the Consumers' Association of

Bangladesh, said the shutdown of Karwan Bazar will certainly affect consumers. Prices of vegetables and other commodities will

But a high official of the revenue department of Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) said the closure will not have much of an impact. "It will not really affect businesses or consumers much."

When asked about the traders' loss, Mizanur Rahman, the commissioner of Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) said, "All of us should sacrifice for the sake of the security and the greater interest of the country.

"Retailers of the city should buy and store essential things before 10th of November," he added.

The Karwan Bazar based traders association sources said they will count a loss of more than Tk 100 crore each day during the closure.

At present, there are 22 markets and 61 traders' associations in Karwan Bazar wholesale market. The daily business transaction of each of these associations ranges from Tk 5 lakh to Tk 50 lakh.

On October 18, the home ministry decided to shut down Karwan Bazar from November 10 to13 for the security of the November 12-13

Dog Squad at Work



A trained dog sniffing at a micro-bus at the entrance to Dhaka Sheraton Hotel, a venue of the two-day 13th Saarc Summit, scheduled to open on November 12.

Vehicle owners panicked as random requisition goes on

KAUSAR ISLAM AYON

Random requisition of buses, microbuses and pick-ups by the traffic department of the Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) have panicked vehicle owners ahead of the 13th Saarc Summit.

According to DMP sources the authorities require more than 550 buses and about 700 micro-buses and pick-ups to be utilised by various departments during the summit.

As such, owners of such vehicles refrain from bringing their vehicles

"We need our vehicles for personal use and we face a lot of troubles in absence of vehicles. The traffic sergeants seize the papers of the vehicle and order us to submit the vehicle at the Razarbagh Police Line by midnight," said Dipu Ahmed owner of a microbus.

"It is not a question of giving the

vehicle that matters, but the after effects of its use that costs more. We have to spend quite a lot on repairs on vehicles requisitioned," he said.

DMP officials said that out of the total requirement only 50 percent is requisitioned while the rest is rented.

"We have already rented 200 buses and 300 micro-buses and pick-ups. The rest will be filled up through regular requisitions," said Zahurul Haque, traffic inspector-1 of DMP.

Although the officials of the DMP said they have rented the vehicles they are not sure when the payments would be made to the vehicle owners.

"We rented many vehicles when the last two summits were scheduled. The summits were cancelled but we could not make any payment to the companies that rented out their vehicles," admitted an official of the traffic department.

He mentioned that the amount due as rent for vehicles utilised for two

postponed schedules is Tk. 14 lakh.

A wholesale market gives a barren look as most of the traders have left for home after the shutdown order.

"The companies that rented the vehicles are pressing us for payment. We have not been allotted with any funds for such payments and many of them have refused to rent out their vehicles," said the DMP official. "Payment this time too, is also uncer-

tain," he added. With security beefed-up for Saarc summit, the number of required vehicles has also increased and the payment for rents will also increase by 50 percent.

Owners of vehicles are left helpless as they are compelled to hand over requisitioned vehicles or give them on rent according to DMP provision 103 Ka (1).

"We have already given 146 buses and have for payment. Although the DMP has accepted the offer, no rate has been fixed yet," said Saiful Alam, general secretary, Dhaka Sarak Paribahan Samity.

He said that the association has asked the DMP to pay a minimum of Tk. 2,500 to 3,000 for each bus. But DMP has not yet agreed to rate nor have they quoted a figure.

According to DMP sources and vehicle owners, the DMP owes more than Tk 100 crore as rents and compensation for vehicles requisitioned from different private and government organisations in the last 30

The High Court last year ordered DMP not to requisition private cars but the traffic department has paid no heed to such order.

"We need many vehicles and the demand cannot be met by company or state owned vehicles. We have no choice but to requisition a few private cars," said another official of DMP traffic department.

Vehicles dumped on the Rajarbagh Police Line compound.

LAST-MINUTE BEAUTIFICATION

City wears a different look ahead of Summit

CITY CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka wears a beautiful look to welcome the South Asian leaders and other delegates in the Saarc summit beginning on November 12.

Workers are now busy giving final touches to their work under a project undertaken one year ago. They are also making some hasty changes at some places as part of the last-minute beau-

The city dwellers who went out of the city on Eid vacation, were amazed to see the new look after returning to

"It is amazing. So many changes within less than a week," said Khasru Chowdhury, who went to his village in Mymensingh on the vacation and returned to Dhaka after Eid.

The roads, medians, road islands, intersections and footpaths have been decorated with flower plants. The bamboo and iron fencing around beautified spots have been removed ahead of the summit.

The roads that will be used by the guests attending the South Asia's most prestigious summit have been decorated with the flags and portraits of the heads of the state and government of the seven countries.

These roads have got a new look as the Dhaka City Corporation has removed the odd-looking billboards, signboards and the posters and graffiti on the walls. "We have whitewashed a number of

buildings and walls, and asked many building owners to do it ahead of the summit," said an official in the Dhaka City Beautification Cell (DCBC).

At Karwan Bazar, a wholesale vegetable market, has been cleaned up and rebuilt overnight and a giant signboard put on it.

The roads that have got the highest priority in the beautification are VIP roads, from Bijoy Sarani to Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Centre, the road in front of Roads, medians, intersections and islands are being cleaned and decorated with flowers, flags and portraits of leaders



This dirty wholesale vegetable market at Karwan Bazar was rebuilt overnight as part of the last-minute beautification.

Zia Udyan, from west side of Mohakhali flyover to Kakrail mosque via Jahangir Gate, Farmgate, hotel Sonargaon and Sheraton.

New road signs and signals both on and beside the roads have been installed. Final washing and cleaning of

the roads are now going on. Both sides of these roads and road dividers have been lighted with decora-

tive fairy lights and lamps. The summit venues and many important buildings have also been illuminated. These include the Prime Ministers' Office and residence,

Bangladesh-China Friendship

Conference Centre, hotel Sonargaon and Sheraton. The untidy knots of telephone, elec-

tricity, internet and satellite TV cables have been rearranged. Besides, footpaths have been freed from hawkers. The city dwellers say they always

dream of such a beautiful city and wish this beautification will not disappear after the end of the summit. "The authorities should be strict

not to let the hawkers come back to the city roads and footpaths again and should not allow posters and graffiti on walls anymore.," said Kaiser Ahmed, an elderly citizen.