Plenty of

## Park turned wholesale market

KAUSAR ISLAM AYON

The once children's park in Karwan Bazar under the purview of the Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) has now turned to a 'legal' wholesale market.

The park consisted of all facilities for children's play and recreation twelve years back. The space was encroached over a decade back and the DCC was legally battling to revive the park. The last ray of hope dimmed away as the DCC decided to allot the plot to vendors who were already occupy-

The three-acre plot where the Karwan Bazar Khudra Kanchamal Arat Babsayi Bahumukhi Samabai Samity Limited (Samity) market is situated was set aside for a children's park during the reign President HM Ershad.

After the fall of Ershad's government in 1990 businessmen of the area encroached the park and set up the market. The DCC issued a notice to these businesspeople asking them to vacate the park space. But the encroachers filed a case against DCC and the court issued a stay order on the evic-





The newly constructed Karwan Bazar wholesale market, built the space originally used as a children's park, is now bustling with vendors and customers.

Finally in October this year the DCC reached an agreement with the leaders of the samity permitting the premises to be used on rent.

DCC officials said they permitted this association to use the land till such time the court gives a verdict, but DCC lawyers said this action would

weaken DCC's ground to fight the stay order.

"These businessmen are using the space as a market for more than 10 years and they owe the DCC Tk 1.67 million. The DCC agreed on condition the dues would be cleared," said an official in the estate department of DCC.

When asked how the DCC

could claim rent from "encroachers", the official could not give a satisfactory answer.

However he said that when the government relocates the market according to the original master plan, the present one will be turned to a park again, but did not have an idea when it would take place.

But another DCC high official

said no agreement to allocate this land to encroachers has been made yet. He said that some DCC officials and samity leaders are spreading the rumour that both parties have come to an agreement.

"I have not seen any agreement papers. To be safe the DCC officials involved in this case did not prepare any

papers, leaving option to escape from the situation, in case of pressure from the authorities," he said.

Prior to the SAARC summit in November the samity leaders put up a permanent structure in the marked spot. There are now 104 shops of 185 square feet each, from which DCC is expected to receive Tk 1,850 a

month from each shop.

To a question regarding the arrears for 10 years, the KBKKABBSSL president said that all 104 businessmen utilising the premises have agreed to pool-in and clear the outstand-

"The 104 businessmen will pay up Tk 1.47 lakh each for 10 years according to the agree-

ment between us and the DCC. said Solaiman Nabi, president of the samity.

Regards the encroachment the president said they have not encroached the land but had been running their business at this spot legally for the last twelve years.

"No child ever came here for recreation and there is no necessity of a children's park in this area. I don't understand the meaning of turning a profitable land into a non-profit-making venture," said Nabi.

Apart from this spot, another open space to the east of the kitchen market has also been encroached for several years. Although two eviction dramas were staged the 160 shops in the plot still stand as before.

A field survey by the Bangladesh Environment Lawyers' Association said designated spaces for children's parks under the DCC's jurisdiction in Sayedabad, Jatrabari, and Mirpur have also been encroached.

The many organisations ncluding Bangladesh Paribesh Andolan (BAPA) demanded the protection of Karwan Bazar Shishu Park and other parks in

## Open garbage containers on streets pollute environment

Novera Deepita

If one enters the road 15/A, Dhanmondi, he or she would be struck by an abominable odour that comes from the roadside garbage container. Crows are seen eating the pieces of garbage, which makes the condition even worse. Street children collect waste papers from the container while the cleaners of a nearby hospital dump medical waste.

The container lies between the footpath and the road ious about their patients; and such unhygienic environment certainly makes them feel

Md Anisuzzaman, manager (administration) of Ibn Sina the Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) authority several times to remove it from this place. A year ago we last made a written application to them. We also have asked the local DCC inspectors about the problems we face. But they have not yet taken any action.'

Anisuzzaman also said the DCC officials say they do not

hours, producing bad odour. And the DCC is the only body that cleans up the garbage of the entire city every day."

The DCC has nothing to do with the smell because the Hospital, said, "We have asked residents do not use bags to dump the garbage in the containers, he said.

'Although DCC has only one third of the needed manpower and a limited budget, we have an organised system for cleaning up the waste in which it is assured that the garbage will be collected from each house by the DCC cleaners to dump it in proper places," he added.

Pedestrians covering their nose walk past a garbage container on road 15/A in Dhanmondi.

beside the Ibn Sina Hospital occupying considerably big space, which made the entrance narrow. It is quite impossible for the pedestrians to pass through the way without covering their nose.

Many such open and poorly maintained garbage containers and dustbins are placed on roads in an unplanned manner -- even near hospitals.

Mehzabin Khan of Dhanmondi, who recently took her ailing daughter to the hospital, said, "It is quite unbelievable that such a reputed hospital allows an open garbage container within a few yards of its vicinity. People who go to hospital usually remain anxhave any alternative place to relocate it. "We dump the infectious waste at the garbage dumping site in Matuail through the DCC-approved NGO named Prism. But the general wastes are dumped in this container," he said.

But the DCC officials said they have not received any written complaint from the hospital

According to the DCC, there are about 400 roadside containers throughout the city for dumping garbage.

Sohel Faruquee, chief conservatory officer of DCC, said: "About 60-70 percent waste of the city is organic which starts decompose within two

Asked why the containers are placed improperly, Faruquee said, "These are usually placed at suitable places to ensure that all residences and buildings of the area are covered properly." There are some other open

and poorly maintained garbage containers and dustbins at Panthapath near Shamorita Hospital, on Jigatola main road, Progoti Sarani in Maddhya Badda, in front of Maghbazar Agora superstore and on Gulshan road-34.

Tahmina Kaiser, a resident of Gulshan Avenue, said, "It is quiet hard to walk through the roads or even take a rickshaw to ride past this garbage container [on road-34]. It seems quite unbelievable that a posh area like Gulshan has such an open dustbin."

According to DCC, there are only three spots to dump all the garbage of Gulshan-1 and 2 areas. The other two spots are on road-62 and road-86.

Asked about the poor maintenance of these containers, a DCC official preferring anonymity said, "We always try to keep these containers clean, although it is not an easy job. Because we don't have any solid waste management system for recycling the garbage," he said.

"There is hardly any alternative place to change the spots. The local people are not cooperative. They do not want us to remove the garbage containers," he added.

Another garbage container is placed without proper maintenance on road 6/A beside the Dhanmondi Lake. There is a gate of the park and a restaurant hardly few yards off the

Shahnaz Parveen, a Dhanmondi resident, complained about the dustbin: "When the garbage trucks come to collect these containers in the afternoon, we simply cannot keep the window open because of the bad odour. These trucks also seem to take too much time for the loading of the container. Pieces of garbage also keep dropping from the truck while it moves.'

"We don't have those completely special metal-covered trucks like the developed countries. Those trucks cost one and a half crore taka each what we cannot afford because of fund constrains," said Faruquee, the chief conservatory officer.

Faruquee however admitted that the roadside containers cannot be maintained properly. 'Some of these containers have got damaged in day-today use which is quiet natural. To maintain these containers we need more fund."

## SEEING IS BELIEVING







Tourism Fair 2005 which will conclude today saw large crowds giving them an insight of places of tourist attraction, including historical monuments and places of natural beauty.