



the city that was

Human settlement in Dhaka city started from the 7th century, but the natural geomorphological setting began to be modified, probably from the 12th century. In the first phase, until 1850, only the higher grounds, especially the natural levee and Madhupur Clay units along the Buriganga River were selected for urbanisation.

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RESIDENTS OF GULSHAN, BANANI AND BARIDHARA DEMAND

Demarcate Lake now!

STAR REPORT

But the joy of the onlookers did not last long.

Under pressure from successive governments Rajuk secretly converted the walkway areas into residential plots and allocated them to party high-ups and members of the cabinets. To the suspicion of residents of Gulshan, Baridhara and Banani, Rajuk is currently constructing the same walkway filling up long stretches of the foreshores.

The residents in a signed statement emphasised the need for demarcating the Banani part of the lake urgently. The Banani part of the lake has been most vulnerable to random encroachments. Even yesterday labourers were seen at the end of Road 23 dumping rubbish into the lake.

Rajuk sources said that the entirety of the Banani lake has been somehow sold out to individuals under the very nose of corrupt authorities. The offenders under political influence have been so overtly defiant to the wetland protection laws that 'no one dared' stop them from indiscriminately filling up one of the last remaining water bodies in the centre of the city.

Over the last two decades several half-hearted attempts by Rajuk to demarcate the lake miserably failed. The residents and environmentalists in the beginning welcomed Rajuk when it unveiled plans to pave a walkway along the banks of the three-part lake in a bid to demarcate it.

A top Rajuk official said requesting anonymity that the demarcation process must immediately be expedited.

"During a political government it is very difficult for us to do our job as influential quarters always interfere, but now this is the high time to do the job," he said.



Gulshan Banani-Baridhara Lake at Banani part is the most vulnerable to encroachments. The picture taken yesterday shows earth-filling of the lake at the end of Road-23.



Nurses at work at the Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

SHORTAGE OF SKILLED MANPOWER 2

Unskilled nurses run most hospitals

DURDANA GHIAS

Most of the hospitals are running with unskilled nurses as the government and private nursing institutes cannot produce skilled ones with mostly poor quality students taking the nursing courses.

Doctors working in both government and private hospitals said diploma nurses are not efficient enough. The hospitals need skilled nurses having BSc degree. They said the shortage is so acute that many private hospitals have now resorted to recruiting nurses from abroad.

Social taboos and misconceptions, good students' lackadaisical attitude towards nursing profession and the current nursing education system are the major reasons for shortage of skilled nurses.

Dr Abu Sayeed MM Rahman, consultant, surgery, United Hospital, said that it needs a lot of time to solve the problem of shortage of skilled nurses.

"The shortage of skilled nurses is a deep-rooted problem. Nurses come from families facing some kind of financial hardship. In our society there is a taboo on nursing profession and girls from respectable families are discouraged to come to this profession," said Dr Sayeed.

"No one writes in school essays that she wants to be a nurse. In other countries nursing is a noble profession. But we are yet to understand that. I think a campaign on the significance of nursing profession will improve the situation and the media can play a good role in this," he added.

He also said good students want to become doctors, not a nurse. Nursing course is taken up by the girls who are not good students. "This is a big reason for the slide in the quality of their work and lack of skilled nurses."

Dr Sayeed said: "If the nurses can do the graduation in nursing or BSc course [direct BSc] after passing HSC, in that case we could get good students. But

most of them are diploma nurses. After recruiting them we have to give them a basic training on spoken and written English language and make them computer literate due to their poor quality."

"We also train them for building up caring attitude and self-respect. Usually they come from the lower level of the society and it is our job to make them realise that their profession is noble," said the doctor.

"The situation has forced many private hospitals to recruit nurses from abroad. This cannot be a long-term solution. We have a few nurses from Malaysia to train them up. I think we should work to develop our own skilled manpower and send them abroad.

Training the nurses is one kind of investment. If they are trained well they will get jobs abroad," he said.

According to Bangladesh Nursing Council every year on average 700 to 800 nurses pass diploma course. Till now there are 20,120 registered diploma nurses in the country and among them

19,489 are female nurses, according to Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS).

In 2006 the number of registered posts of nurses in the government hospitals is 15,154.

With the rapid growth of the sector demand for qualified nurses is rising rapidly.

There are 38 government nursing institutes (NIs) in the country with 1,135 seats which offer diploma courses. There are eight institutes in the private sector with around 163 seats.

Country's only nursing college is in city's Mohakhali that provides BSc course. Open University and some private universities have recently introduced BSc course in nursing but those courses are yet to be finished. Till now all the BSc nurses we have are from the Nursing College.

Affiliated with Dhaka University, the college has two courses -- BSc Nursing and BSc Public Health Nursing (PNS). It has one principal, 10 regular

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EVICTION DRIVE

Dhaka wears different look

With the massive eviction drive undertaken in the city many question its sustainability while others criticise the method in which hundreds of thousands of people were stripped of their livelihoods

RAIHAN SABUKTAGIN

The residents of Dhaka are once again happy but started to wonder already about the sustainability of the caretaker government's praiseworthy effort to free up the sidewalks, streets, public parks, lakes and rivers in and around the city from illegal street vendors and encroachers.

Dhaka residents saw many drives of this sort in the past during many political governments and they also saw how quick those evicted elements return and encroach on the freed-

up space with the help of dishonest government officials and the law enforcement agencies.

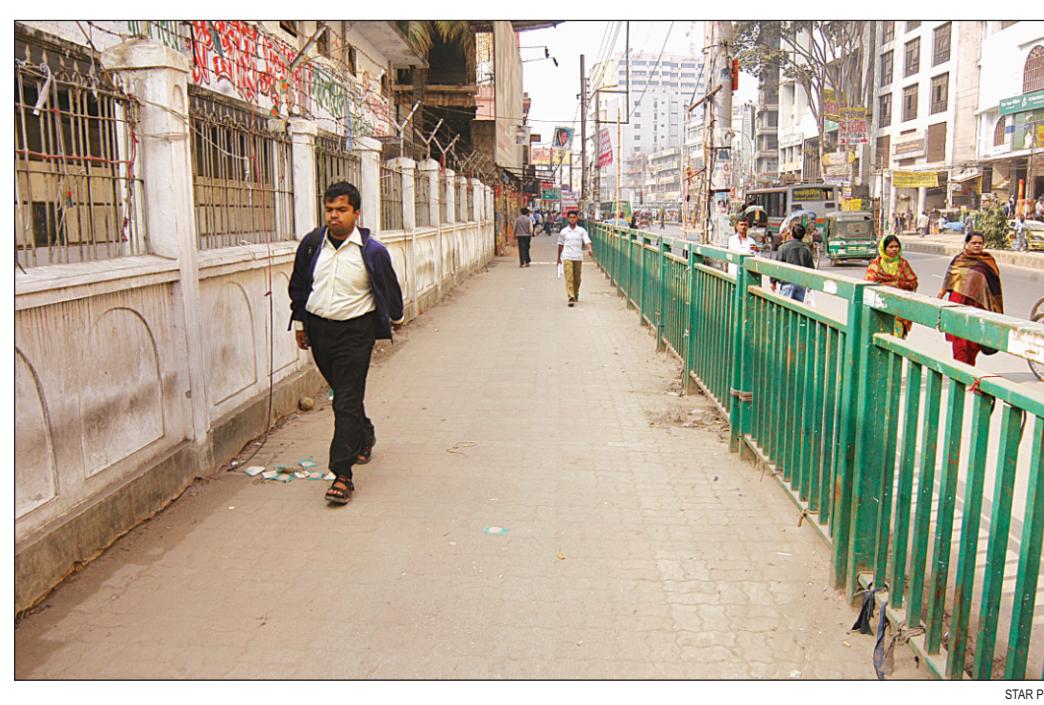
Every one in this city knows illegal street vendors and encroachers share a large amount of their income with the government bodies that are supposed to monitor illegal encroachments. And this is why they know that the latest eviction drive will only work temporarily because the dishonest elements in the government and law enforcement agencies who receive a large chunk of the pie from the street vendors and encroachers will find a way to

bounce back.

Thousands of stalls were set up on the city sidewalks, roads, playgrounds and open spaces and police always overlook the illegal act in exchange of a "fixed fee" from each illegal stall depriving the pedestrians and other road users from their right of movement.

Tolls from illegal vendors on sidewalks and streets are a major source of income of the local ward commissioners and political thugs as well.

Many vendors at Farmgate,



With footpath near Baitul Mukarram cleared of hawkers citizens can now walk freely

Unfit vehicles keep fouling city air

RAIHAN SABUKTAGIN

Metropolitan Police as the DoE does not have its own force or any officer with magistracy power. Besides, it is not easy to get police duty, he said.

At present, DoE is conducting such drive once a week. Nazim Uddin said they are planning to conduct the drive twice a week.

He said that DoE is trying to create two posts of magistrates under the department so that in future the department can conduct drives more frequently.

Continuous drive against faulty vehicles would reduce the pollution level in the air of Dhaka as smoke emitted by vehicles is the key source of air pollution in the city.

Faulty vehicles, brick kilns, foundries, vessels and plastic factories contribute to the increase of air pollution in Dhaka, said Nasir Uddin, project director of the Air Quality Management Project (AQMP) under the DoE.

Faulty vehicles are the largest

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