

Cops undergo reform with revamp of crime scene investigation

DURDANA GHAS

City's police stations are going to experience a significant change as the police force is undergoing heavy reform under a \$16 million project, funded by United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

Under the Police Reform Programme (PRP), crime scene investigation (CSI) will be given high emphasis and the forensic department will be overhauled. Officials are hoping that the training of investigators on CSI will change the whole look of the crime investigation process.

Two model police stations — Dhanmondi and Uttara — in the city will be provided with CSI kits for collecting skin, blood, hair or any other body parts from the crime scene for DNA test. Sub-inspectors (SIs) who generally work as investigating officers will be given training on how to use the kit.

NBK Tripura, additional inspector general of police and national project director of PRP, said that they are going to put greater emphasis on physical evidence rather than on oral

evidence during an investigation. "If DNA can be included as evidence then oral evidence will be secondary," said Tripura.

"We have started the basic training of SIs or IOs on how to operate the CSI kit. Forensic training will start after we have all the kits at hand," he said. "This new project has generated much interest among the police force and is about to bring some revolutionary change in the investigation process."

The officers will be trained on enclosing crime scene with yellow tape, collecting fingerprints, skin, blood or hair to have DNA samples. But to establish DNA as a means to prove someone guilty or innocent in court the Evidence Act will need to be amended, Tripura said.

"We are working towards this goal so that we can include DNA as a means to prove someone guilty or innocent," said Farid Ahmed, public relations officer, PRP.

When a crime takes place police often arrest several suspects from the crime scene among whom one may be the

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A foreign expert gives training on crime scene investigation to constables and sub-inspectors of Dhanmondi police station at Dhanmondi Club ground.

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.

"People in the flood-affected areas are not in that miserable condition, they are well."

-- MA Matin
Communications
Adviser

Told freedom fighters donating a cheque for flood victims at the Ministry of Liberation War Affairs, on Sunday. Source: The Daily Star



"The DU VC requested me to formulate a master plan for the university. I am sorry; I could not finish it yet."

-- Prof Nazrul Islam

Chairman, University Grants Commission

Said at a reception of the Department of Women and Gender Studies of Dhaka University, on Friday. Source: The Daily Star

"There is no division in the party."

- Abdul Mannan
Bhuiyan

Secretary General, BNP
Said at a media briefing after distributing relief goods among flood victims at Manikganj in the capital, on Sunday. Source: The Daily Star



"I do not believe that workers can go berserk like this for arrear of just one month."

-- Md Mainuddin

Joint Secretary, Chittagong BGMEA

Said after workers of a garment and textile factory in Nasirabad area vandalised the unit demanding arrear salary, on Wednesday. Source: The Daily Star

"Both are tough. But what we are doing here can be done if you have some courage. A century needs more than just courage."

-- Mohammad Ashraf

Captain, Bangladesh Cricket Team

Told reporters when asked which one is tougher century or commando training, on Wednesday. Source: Prothom Alo

"The media should be taken as a friend not as a foe in anti-terrorism drives."

-- General Masud Uddin Chowdhury

Principal Staff Officer of Armed Forces

Said at a seminar on anti-terrorism laws, on Sunday. Source: Prothom Alo

Compiled by Durdana Ghias

Polythene menace not over

Manufacturers 'secretly' continue production of shopping bags while consumers use them 'silently'

SHAHNAZ PARVEEN

In spite of a government ban, the hazardous polythene shopping bag is slowly making a comeback as a section of unscrupulous manufacturers secretly continue their production and consumers silently revive its use.

Illegal manufacturers are taking advantage of the increasing public demand for polythene bags because an environment friendly alternative is yet to develop.

Polythene is available in every kitchen market. Especially the fish traders are using them vastly. Almost every vegetable seller in the kitchen market secretly keeps a stack of polythene somewhere.

It is also available in the neighbourhood grocery shops, general stores and even with the street side hawkers and vendors.

Polythene can be easily bought at any wholesale packet stores of the city. It is usually sold by kilograms at wholesale shops.

At Karwan Bazar price of 1 kg

polythene is around Tk.100, while a single polythene would cost around Tk.1. As camouflage, manufacturers only changed the shape, size and colour of the bag.

The main production area and wholesale market of polythene bags include Lalbagh, Chwakhbazar, Begumbazar, Mukimkatra, Nimtoli, Debidash Lane, Imamganj, Islambagh, Sutrapur, Shyampur, Kamrangirchar and Moulvibazar in old part of Dhaka, which cater to the retailers in the city. A huge fraction of the production also goes out of the city to the rest of the districts.

Dr. Tariq Bin Yousuf, Waste Management Division, Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) said, "The percentage of polythene in the Matuail landfill area is increasing everyday. It is higher than last year." Waste pickers salvage around 20 per cent polythene from the total waste dumped at the Matuail landfill.

DCC collects around 60 per cent of the total solid waste from

Dhaka city. The rest remains uncollected, along with a considerable amount of polythene, which eventually ends up in the sewer and water bodies.

Yousuf also mentioned that apart from the polythene bags, shopping bags made of mosquito net being used in the city are also hazardous for the environment. "These bags are also non-biodegradable and can cause harm to the environment," he said.

According to Dhaka Water Supply and Sewerage Authority (WASA) the problem of clogging in the sewerage system is largely caused by polythene dumped by the city dwellers.

"Polybag scenario had experienced a massive improvement right after the ban. However, it is slowly coming back," said Zahirul Alam, Superintendent Engineer (Drainage Circle) Dhaka WASA.

"City dwellers dump household wastes and other wastes wrapped with polythene or mosquito net bag in the surface drainage system. It is one of the main

reasons why the city sewerage system remains clogged," he added.

"Polythene itself is a non-biodegradable object. When household wastes are wrapped in polythene, they take more time to decompose. It creates a ball of waste in the sewer, which does not move with the water flow. So eventually it leads to water logging," he added.

"Because of these balls it will take more time for the recent flood to clear from the city," he said.

Alam mentioned that during rain, polythene from the streets and dustbins end up in the sewer.

On January 1, 2002, the government imposed a ban on the production, marketing and use of polythene in Dhaka city (below 100 micron), followed by a nationwide ban on April 8 of the same year because as a non-biodegradable environmental hazard, polythene has wreaked havoc on public sanitation.

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Polybags are out to bounce back taking advantage of indifference to it by both consumers and the authorities.

A children's park in awful state

English Road Park now transport stand and den of addicts, criminals

TAWFIQUE ALI

Despite a consistent public outcry to restore city parks and playgrounds, their state remains as appalling as they have been for years -- thanks to the city fathers and managers.

Over the years, a children's park named English Road Park in old town, also known as Tanti Bazar Park, has been reduced to a transport stand and a safe haven for drug addicts and anti-socials. The "children's park" is home to anyone -- from drifters, panhandlers to makeshift tea-stall owners -- but children.

In case the children in the area desperately seeking some amusement enter the park, they put themselves in harm's way as most of the rides in the park are either out of order or hazardous for their use, observed locals.

The awful state of the children's park, however, is not enough to have the attention of the authorities of Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) -- responsible

for maintenance of city parks. There seems to be no public office that is at all concerned that the children of this neighbourhood, a densely populated urban jungle with barely any greenery, are being deprived of their right to a recreational park, lamented a resident of the area.

Blatant negligence of the DCC has resulted in decay and destruction of the rides in the park or has allowed those to be stolen over the years, he said.

Kamruzzaman Chowdhury, chief estate officer of DCC, said the DCC zone offices are responsible for maintenance of parks and playgrounds of a particular neighbourhood.

"We, however, have conducted a survey of parks and playgrounds in the city," he said adding, "We will place the findings before the advisory committee on the city's park development and beautification and take measures as per the committee's recommendation."

Meanwhile, in an unexplainable move, the DCC has leased out the 0.33-acre English Road

Park, to a private company to "beautify" it. People will have a restricted entry into the park with such a lease contract for "beautification".

According to sources at DCC, the lessee would rent out the "beautified" site for installation of advertisement billboards.

The locals expressed their resentment over commercialisation of a children's park, as the lessee would beautify the park mainly for advertisement business and not for breathing space of children and general public, said sources.

Chief engineer of DCC Col M Ashfaqul Islam said they take note of deplorable cases of public parks and "try to take measures" accordingly.

"But there is a resource constraint and we cannot address them all," he said, "We try to address as much as we can."

That the DCC itself is unaware of how many parks and grounds it is responsible for maintenance, is clearly indicative of how pitiable state the governance of the agency is in.

Some of the public parks exist only on paper while some children's parks are bare of any features worth the name. The rest are simply in abandoned condition, according to recent findings.

According to the DCC information guide, it has 47 public parks. According to its estate department records however, DCC has 41 parks. According to a recent survey of DCC, it has 61 parks.

Rajdhani Unnayan Kartipakkha (Rajuk) handed over 42 public parks in the capital city to DCC for maintenance in the early 80s.

A recent survey by the DCC and another one by Bangladesh Poribesh Andolan (Bapa) found that the English Road Park is in fact a vehicle depot now.

Ideally, any city should have at least 10 to 25 percent open and green spaces, according to experts. Whereas, as per Dhaka master plan, Dhaka's old town had 5 percent while new town had 12 percent greenery in 1995.



The English Road Park in Tantibazar area has been turned into a truck stand over the years.

ANISUR RAHMAN