

hello dhaka

Weekly weather forecast for the city	Today	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	Low: 16 °C High: 26 °C Comfortable with sunshine	Low: 16 °C High: 25 °C Sunny and pleasant	Low: 16 °C High: 25 °C Mostly sunny and pleasant	Low: 14 °C High: 24 °C Sunny and nice	Low: 13 °C High: 25 °C Sunny and pleasant	Low: 13 °C High: 25 °C A full day of sunshine	Low: 13 °C High: 25 °C Plenty of sun

WEEK AHEAD

source: bcgweather.com

e-mail: starcity@thedailystar.net

IMPLEMENTATION OF INTEGRATED DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

Only 11 structures have to be removed from Hatirjheel

TAWFIQUE ALI

A total of 11 structures including six on government land and five on private land have to be removed for implementation of the Begunbari-Hatirjheel integrated development project, project officials said quoting the study on the project.

A team of experts, headed by Professor Mujibur Rahman of Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (Buet), presented the layout design of the peripheral road to the project site office in presence of the LGRD adviser on Thursday. Prof Mujibur Rahman told Star City that construction work for the road has begun at the Tongi Diversion Road point towards Rampura. Rest of the survey works and design preparations will go on simultaneously, he added.

According to him, though it was apprehended that many buildings would be demolished in the way of project implementation, the detailed survey has brought the number down to only 11 in the Hatirjheel lowland area.

"We have identified 175 acres of government land in the 295-acre project area. The rest of the land is privately-owned lowland," he said.

Md Haider Ali, executive engineer of Local Government Engineering Department (LGED), said, "We have started the construction work of the peripheral ring road at Tongi Diversion Road point on Thursday."

Field survey has been completed. Prof Mujibur said: "Now we are preparing layout of the development work on the basis of field survey and carrying out geo-technical investigation. Design work for sewer diversion is also going on."

The Buet team will draw up designs of all three components



Construction of the peripheral road at Tongi Diversion Road point has started Thursday.

of the project -- the ring road, drainage system and canal development -- for implementation by LGED, Dhaka Wasa and Rajdhani Unnayan Kartripakkha (Rajuk).

The primary goals of the study are to ensure enhancing water retention capacity and adequate flow of storm water in the entire stretch of the wetland, to ease up traffic situation with a peripheral ring road and to restore the environment in the canal area diverting wastewater discharge and landscaping in the neighborhood, Mujibur said.

The Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (Ecne) approved the development project pro forma (DPP) on October 8.

According to Prof Mujibur Rahman, 40 percent of planning and design work has so far been

completed. The entire project area will be divided into several zones and physical implementation will take place zone wise following sequence of different works, he said.

New diversion sewer system will be developed to prevent discharge of wastewater into the Begunbari canal and Hatirjheel wetland areas.

As per plan, wastewater from adjoining areas will be carried up to Dasherbandi point where a treatment plant is expected to be setup.

The peripheral ring road will begin from behind the Sonargaon Hotel and walkway across the hotel's under-construction extension work.

Quoting the Rajuk authorities, Prof Mujibur said the extension work of Sonargaon Hotel in the

Begunbari canal has been undertaken without permission.

According to experts, all the unauthorised structures in the city's Begunbari canal and Hatirjheel areas have to be removed and allotment of plots in the area must be cancelled to achieve the goals of the integrated project.

There should not be any obstructions within the canal area if the project is aimed at serving drainage purposes restoring the Begunbari canal and Hatirjheel catchment area.

Under the project, Begunbari canal will be dredged to mitigate waterlogging in the city.

Dhaka Metropolitan Development Plan (DMDP) earmarks the Begunbari canal as a natural canal and a designated flood flow zone, prohibiting any

change to its character. Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) has constructed a 15-storey commercial building in the Begunbari canal area without obtaining design approval from the Rajuk.

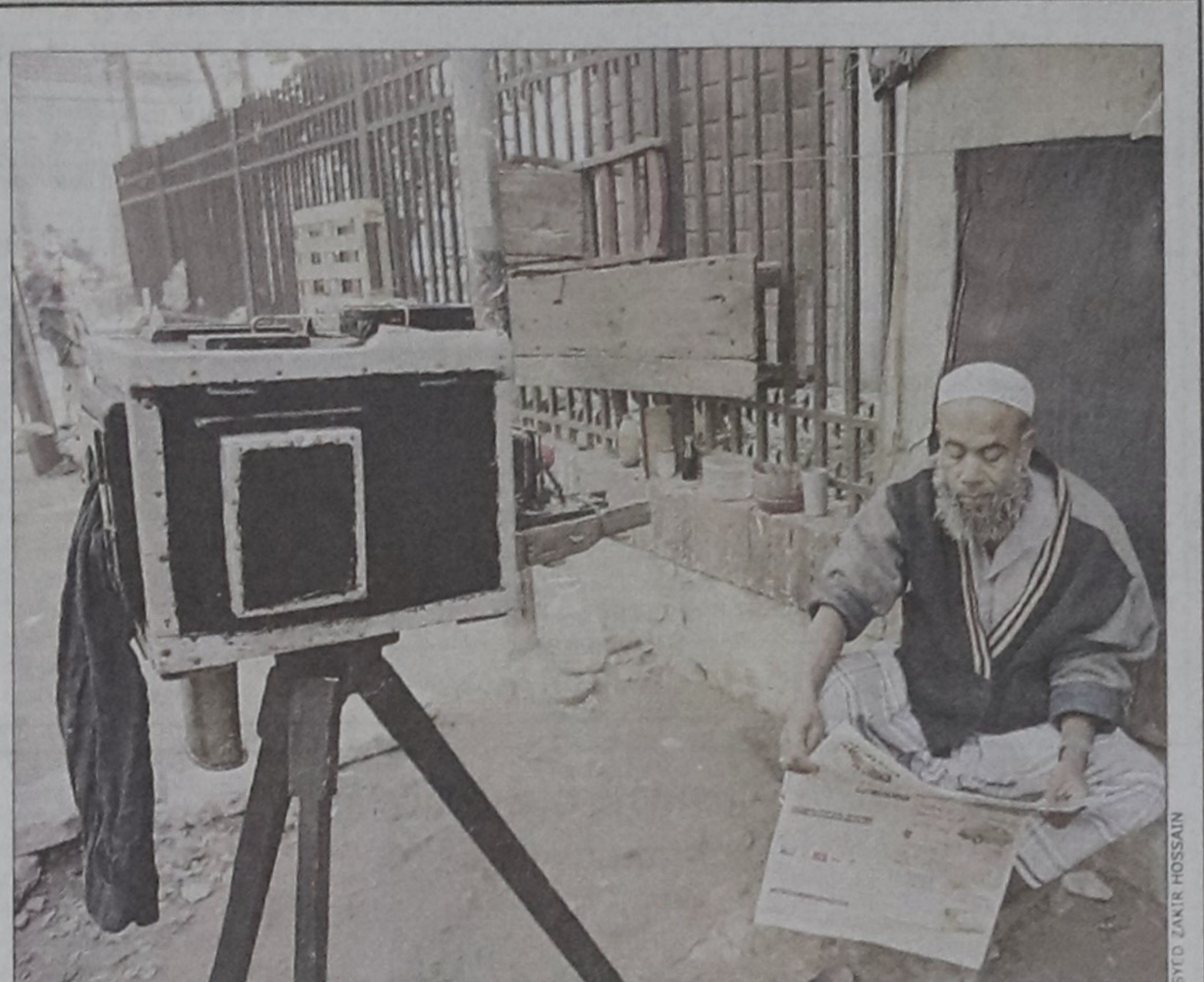
The BNP government, at the fag end of its tenure, allotted four plots to Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI), Bangladesh Textile Mills Association (BTMA), Hotel Hilton (Millennium Holding Limited) and International Arbitration Centre in violation of environment and wetland conservation related laws.

Besides, four other plots were allotted for setting up CNG filling stations, not only in violation of the city's master plan and wetland conservation act but also bending Bangladesh Railway's land management rules of 2006.

Prof. Mujibur Rahman said that the BGMEA building is right in the middle of the canal and obviously an obstruction to implementation of design and layout of the integrated development project. But it is up to the government how to handle the issue.

Responding to recent criticism that many private property will come under requisition and demolition for implementing the project, the Buet professor said their aim is to spare most of the built structures and affect the minimum number of them.

The same team of Prof Mujibur Rahman carried out a similar survey in 2004 in the Begunbari canal and entire stretch of the Hatirjheel for a proposed development scheme of Rajuk. The team then recommended an elevated roadway keeping 265 acres of flood retention plain free from any structures in Begunbari-Hatirjheel area.



Nurul Islam sitting with his 100-year old minute camera on the Johnson Road in old town.

Nurul's 'minute' camera is a living history

He is earning bread with it for over four decades

DURDANA GHIAS

"Don't move. Breathe easy. Head upright. Yes, got you."

Nurul Islam, one of the last remaining 'minute cameramen', was talking to a girl, his customer, sitting tight in front of the big black box of pinhole camera set up on a wooden tripod.

"It's amazing how he shoots a photo. I have seen there is nothing inside the box," said a bystander pointing to Nurul's box camera.

Nurul sits with his camera at a corner under a coconut tree near the court compound where there is a cluster of offices on the Johnson Road.

"I don't know why the advocate left us with this man when there are so many digital studios on the road," said the girl's mother.

"We could have had a digital photo in no time," she said.

In around 10 minutes Nurul washed the photo in a tin pot using chemicals and carbonate powder. He retouched the negative plate with a slender brush when the bromide was ready.

"Is it the same girl?," said Nurul showing the black and white picture of the girl to her parents.

"If it was sunny then it would have been better," he said.

"Unbelievable! How could you shoot picture with an empty box?," said the girl's mother who was whining a few minutes ago for taking a snap of her daughter with this age-old camera.

"Can you tell me how you got the picture?," said an astonished bystander who just could not believe his eyes.

"You stay with me for two months then I will show you."

Handing over two copies of passport size photo of the girl

Nurul was back to *sholuguti* game, his 'friend' at leisure.

Born at the Kobiraj Pott in the capital city Nurul has been working as a professional cameraman since 1964. He is uniquely different as he still takes photos using the same techniques used in the 1960s.

Asked how he got into photography Nurul said, "I used to learn the work of a motor mechanic when I was a teen. At that time there were around 25 photo shops around Palatan Maidan."

"I switched to photography because it was a lucrative career at that time. It could bring around Tk 8,000 to 20,000 monthly. At that time it was a hefty amount when a small amount like Tk 1 was quite enough for us. Besides, we could work independently," he said.

"Most of the photographers were from Kolkata. I was an exception as I was born in Dhaka," he added.

"In the first two years I learned from my Ustad (trainer) the techniques of photography. He used to give me Tk 1 or 2 as my daily allowance. I spent the money lavishly as that was quite a big amount for me," said Nurul.

"At that time I did the job of finishing and colour the negative."

"We used to take around 30 to 40 snaps a day. When there were advertisement for government jobs or degree exams there were lots of pressure on us and we had to snap around 150 to 200 photos a day," said Nurul.

"Three copies of passport size photos would cost Tk 3 at that time. Now I take Tk 45 for two copies. From 1995 we started feeling the slump in business. Now there are only two of us at

Palatan," he said.

"One characteristic of this camera is that it works in natural light. If the sun shines then the picture gets brighter," he added.

Asked about the age of the camera he said, "The camera I am using now is at least 100 years old. It was given to me by a photographer of Ghorashal."

Asked why he is sticking to the old technique when other professional cameramen opted for modern photography Nurul said, "When I think that I am among the few who are maintaining this old tradition of snapping photos I feel very proud."

"Sometimes renowned photographers come to me to learn the technique and invite me to teach the rules to their students," he said. "Still few of us understand the value of old things."

Nurul's children did not take his profession as a way of living but he has no regret over that.

"None of my children came to this profession but still I preserve the few minute cameras I have for those who can understand its true value. They will keep these precious things when I won't be around," said Nurul.

For learners this orthodox procedure is a chapter in their photography course.

"Minute camera is a modified form of pinhole camera. It is an absolute orthodox and basic technique of taking pictures. Whether they use it at work or not I think every photographer should learn how to operate it," said a professional photographer of national daily.

He also suggested that Nurul's camera today can be an object for the national museum.

"It's a living history. The last of its kind may disappear forever anytime," he said.

Reckless racing by bus drivers

Malibagh Intersection becoming risky for commuters and pedestrians

RIZANUZZAMAN LASKAR

Just like any other day, Shafique Ahmed was on his way to drop his daughter off at her school. He hailed a rickshaw from Malibagh Chowdhurypara and started towards her school near the Circuit House in Ramna.

As Shafique settled himself down in the rickshaw holding his daughter close, he began to think of the day ahead and the chores he had to do.

The rickshaw slowly made its way past the army camp set up inside Khilgaon community centre. As rickshawpuller pedalled the three-wheeler to the other side of Malibagh main road, a speeding minibus came whizzing from behind.

"It happened when the rickshaw was passing the street divider. There was a deafening screeching noise followed by a loud thud. Next thing I remember was that I was lying in the middle of the street few feet away from the rickshaw," said Shafique, a businessman from Chowdhurypara.

The front of the rickshaw was completely smashed. The 10-year-old schoolgirl got away with mild injuries but her father was not as lucky.

Shafique had several of his bones fractured. He received more than a few stitches in his right hand and feet, which had to be plastered later. The doctors are yet to give any final decision whether there would be any permanent injuries.

"Thanks to the Almighty that there were not any other vehicles coming that way while I was lying on the street -- who knows what could have happened otherwise," said Shafique.

For every bus driver, the



A bus driver faces public wrath after knocking down a rickshaw at Purana Palatan crossing while driving recklessly last week.

Malibagh thoroughfare seems to be a racing ground to drive as recklessly as possible. Descending from Khilgaon flyover they all pick up speed. The bus that hit Shafique's rickshaw also did the same. It was on the avenue that goes toward Chowdhurypara near the army camp.

Locals point out that accident counts in the Malibagh road have reached an alarming level -- an opinion justified by a spate of street accidents there lately.

A 42-year-old man suffered hand and knee injuries when a minibus crashed into his rickshaw on the Malibagh thoroughfare on January 6.

About a week later (Jan 15), a 25-year-old suffered back injuries when a minibus bumped

into his motorcycle near Malibagh bazaar.

An elderly man was critically injured in an accident with a bus near Khidmah Hospital on Malibagh main road on January 24.

These incidents have some indicators which most people should take notice of. They took place in the street stretching from Khilgaon flyover to Malibagh level crossing and almost always it is a speeding minibus that hit the victims.

"Almost every day on my way home I see broken glasses lying across the main road in front of the street going towards Malibagh Chowdhurypara near Malibagh bazaar," said Afzal Hossain, a resident of Malibagh

Chowdhurypara.

The numerous minibuses operating on this route tend to compete with each other to squeeze in more passengers than the next bus. Invariably, even buses from the same operator seem to be engaged in similar competition.

It is the commuters and pedestrians who fall victim to trivial to gruesome accidents due to reckless driving.

On Sunday last week, this correspondent witnessed a minibus rammed into a three-wheeler Mishuk on the main thoroughfare of Malibagh.

Within moments, the minibus driver jumped out of his window and dashed across the street to vanish in the Malibagh bazaar.

Bus drivers say that sometimes passengers on board encourage them to go fast.

"They keep on nagging -- 'buses from behind are going ahead of you, what on earth you are doing,'" said Alamgir, driver of a minibus.

"Very often, passengers insist on going fast and even encourage drivers to defy signals because they are in a hurry," echoes another minibus driver Sharif Mia.

Most of these accidents take place in presence of traffic police who hardly take any action against the driver.

"The drivers can be as unruly as they wish to be. Because they know they can get away with anything. Traffic sergeants are sometimes a worry, but not enough if the driver is ready to offer them bribe," said Nurul Islam, a resident of Malibagh.

Sohel Arman, a traffic sergeant at Malibagh rail crossing, objects to such sweeping allegations of taking bribe against all traffic sergeants. "As in any other profession, there are also bad people among us," he argues. "Some incidents may escape our eyes from time to time, but we also try our best to do our job."

Aklakur Rahman, traffic inspector for this road, told Star City that he is aware of the road incidents. "We are always trying to promote road safety," said Aklakur. "Involvement of local communities and drivers or riders using this road is also essential if its safety record is to improve," he said.

Malibagh residents believe that a speed breaker near the army camp will force the drivers to slow down and reduce the possibility of accidents on the street.



PRaiseworthy: A traffic police helps a sick person cross street at Sonargaon intersection in the city. Recently the government has taken a series of programmes to change the attitude and image of police so that people find them friendly and helpful.