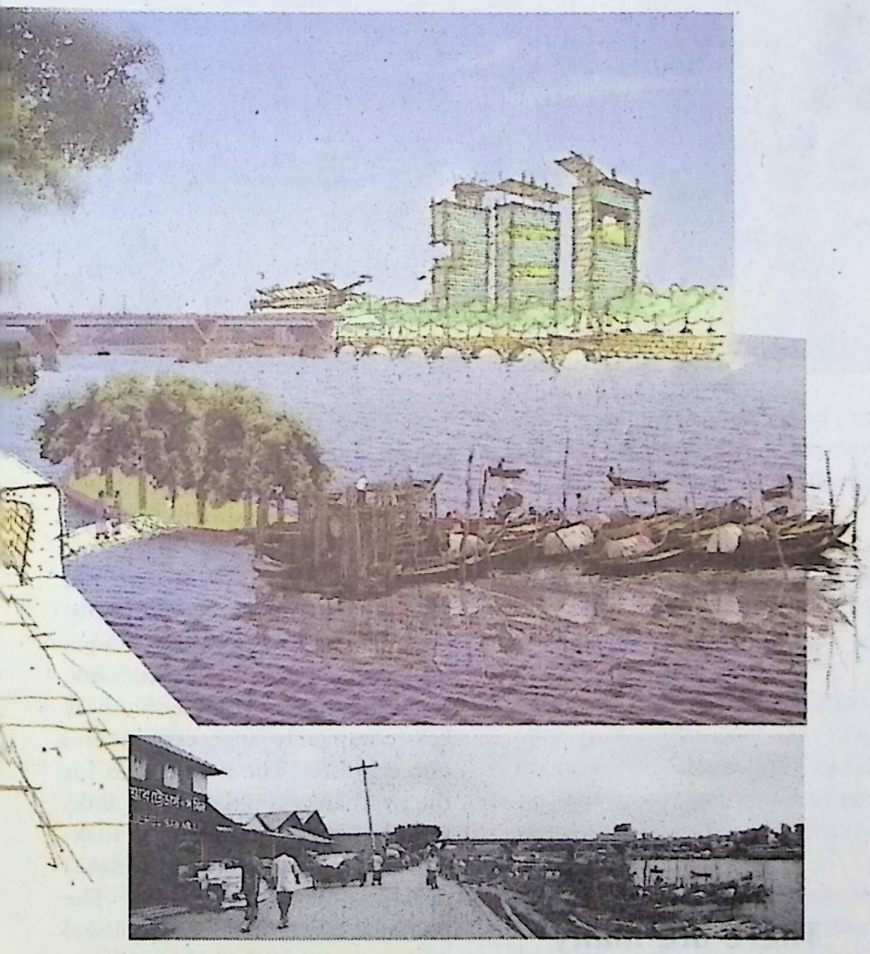
river (on barges), should be part of that network. Various public programs -- cultural, informational and recreational -- could be designed for some of those areas.

Vitality of a river

It is also obvious that to have riverbanks, one needs to have a river. The dynamicity of the river, along with its canals (whichever are remaining), should be recovered and maintained by obliterating adverse features and modifying some of the existing conditions (a drive that is now ongoing). The latter may include radical changes and relocations of some current operations in the area, including the ill-organised and deeply debilitating IWTA terminal. A renewed vitality can be engineered by introducing a new set of economic activities. If Pahela Baishakh can be invented into a cultural phenomenon that defines modern Dhaka, why cannot certain activities be resuscitated that represent the old tradition of the city. We foresee dynamic activities on and along the river through the systematic promotion of boat racing, water pageants, floating restaurants and various tourism related enterprises.



Revitalised Sadarghat as an economic engine

A re-planned and reconstituted Sadarghat can be a more powerful economic engine than the ramshackle bazaar and ad hoc economy it thrives on now. There's no denying that there is an active economy in the area but it is haphazard and myopic, and often stands in contradiction to a larger public good. The new economic benefit deriving from a reorganisation will not only be for the people of the area but for the whole city. The economic turn should be a way to motivate the citizens and stakeholders of the area in participating in a renewal program. With a re-planned Sadarghat, the economic life of the area could be revitalised manifold through new commercial generators, such as well-planned shops and markets, business centres, hotels, restaurants, eateries and other enterprises, including large scale cultural and entertainment centres (rather than the lakri and daab stores, chhapras and hovels lining the river now). All these could create a tourist potential that in turn will generate a new economic bonanza.

New and modern business centres in specific locations, perhaps as tall buildings, could be conceived catering to the vibrant economy of the old city.

Traffic and movement

Traffic through and to Sadarghat is key to a sustainable future. At present, chaos is a synonym for traffic, and even that would be an understatement. New modes of access to and from Sadarghat linking critical points in the city will have to be created. It can be through modest (but creative) rearrangement of existing road and traffic movements, or a little bolder plan of river connections (such as connecting Tongi Bridge to Naryanganj in a river bus and taxi system), and per-