



Waste from adjacent kitchen markets lay piled on the road from Wiseghat to Badamtali in front of Ahsan Manzil, one of the oldest historical sites in Dhaka. The photo was taken recently.  
PHOTO: SHAWKAT JAMIL

# Traders, waste occupy Wiseghat to Badamtali

HELEMUL ALAM

It was 11:30am on a Tuesday when Selina Akhter, a 35 year old woman carrying her two-year-old daughter on her lap, was trying in vain for an hour to hire a rickshaw to go to Sadarghat from Mitford Hospital in the city.

"Not a single rickshaw wanted to go with the excuse of traffic congestion at Badamtali," said Selina.

In many days it takes two to three hours to cross Badamtali for traffic congestion caused by fruit laden covered vans and trucks parked on the road, said Abdul Jalil, a cart puller of the area.

People using Beribadh road from Sadarghat everyday also complained of long tailbacks from Wiseghat to Badamtali, around half a kilometre.

During a recent visit, around 80 trucks and 10 covered vans were seen parked at Badamtali, one of the country's biggest wholesale fruit market, either empty or selling fruits.

A pile of waste around two feet high from adjacent kitchen markets was also seen occupying

around 30 feet of the road in front of Wiseghat.

Those selling the fruits said they usually keep their vehicles parked there for two to three days to sell the fruits they buy from Chittagong port to wholesalers and retailers.

One such trader, Mohammad Faruk, said he would have to stay there to sell the 588 cartons of apples he brought and started selling as early as 6:00 in the morning.

He added that they daily give Tk 100 to Dhaka Mohanagar Fal Amdani, Roptani O Arot Babshae Bahumukhi Samity Limited to hire community police to maintain traffic flow and ensure security of their trucks at night.

Another trader, Shohidul Islam, said he came there three days ago and sold half of his apples.

"If we fail to sell the remaining apples within the next three to four days, we will keep it in a cold storage or begin selling at cheap prices," he said.

Mohammad Masum, commander of community police under Kotwali Police Station, said 14 community policemen work in two shifts to main-

tain traffic flow there.

He said maintaining traffic flow is a struggle now as the number of trucks doubled in comparison to what was three years ago.

But they try their best to always keep a portion of the road free for vehicular movement, he added.

The samity President Md Harun-or-Rashid said they already appointed the community police to maintain traffic flow but pressure of traffic increases during Ramadan and the season when mangoes arrive.

He said they asked Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority for two jetties, with enough space to park around 40 trucks.

Bipon Kumar Shaha, chief waste management officer of Dhaka City Corporation, said they asked the kitchen market authorities to dump waste on the road for a certain period of time to prevent it from being dumped in the Buriganga river.

He said they remove the waste every Thursday night. "Removing the waste every day is not possible due to the traffic congestion there," he said.

# Job quota for Dalits, Harijans mulled

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government is planning a national policy to introduce quota system for Dalit and Harijan communities in different government and private organisations, Social Welfare Minister Enamul Hoque Mostofa Shaheed said yesterday.

People of these communities will also be brought under different social safety net programmes (SSNPs) on priority basis, he told a conference at Bangladesh Shishu Academy auditorium in the city.

The minister said the initiatives have been taken as per the prime minister's instruction to rehabilitate Dalit and Harijan communities for protection of their rights.

Now many Dalit people are entering different sorts of jobs as sweepers and cleaners intensifying unemployment problem in the communities, said Shaheed, adding that to overcome the problem, quota system for them will be introduced soon.

"I have talked with the expatriates' welfare ministry about sending human resources abroad from Dalit communities. I hope, you [Dalit people] will get fruit in this regard soon," he said.

BNP standing committee member Nazrul Islam Khan at the National Harijan-Dalit Conference-2011 urged Dalit people to merge their movement with different labour movements in larger scale to secure

their demands.

Bangladesh Harijans Oikya Parishad, Bangladesh Dalit Parishad, and Antyaja Parishad jointly organised the national conference.

Ranjit Kumar Biswas, secretary-in-charge of the social welfare ministry, promised to take necessary measures to assist Dalit communities to minimise their miseries.

Shaheen Anam, executive director of Manusher Jonno Foundation, urged Dalit communities to continue their movement to end discriminations against them. She also called upon the Dalits to educate their children and resolve their internal disputes to get social dignity.

At the conference, Bangladesh Harijans Oikya Parishad secretary general Nirmal Chandra Das placed a 10-point demand including formation of Dalit commission, making an anti-discrimination policy, preserving 80 percent quota in different jobs of sweeping and cleaning, and arrangement of permanent accommodation for them.

Workers' Party of Bangladesh President Rashed Khan Menon expressed solidarity with the demands.

Bangladesh Harijans Oikya Parishad president Krishna Lal chaired the function while several hundreds of Dalit people from across the country attended it.



Sangkhudho Nagorik Samaj forms a human chain at Shahbagh in the city yesterday protesting torture on Limon Hossain, who was shot and maimed by Rapid Action Battalion on March 23.  
PHOTO: STAR



Bangladesh Green Roof Movement forms a human chain in front of Jatiya Press Club in the city yesterday urging all to set up gardens at rooftops.  
PHOTO: STAR

## Dalai Lama praises Dhaka's role in peace

UNB, Dhaka

Tibet's spiritual leader Dalai Lama has appreciated Bangladesh's role to achieve and sustain global peace.

The appreciation came when he met Bangladesh Permanent Representative to the UN Dr AKA Momen in Australia, said a release from Bangladesh permanent mission in New York.

Momen attended a series of UN peacekeeping and peace building workshops and disaster management seminars in Australia last week where he had been a key note speaker and highlighted Bangladesh's efforts in maintaining peace and promoting peace building in post conflict countries.

"Peace is very difficult to achieve," Dalai Lama told Momen. The Buddhist spiritual leader, however, praised Bangladesh for its role in achieving global peace.

## Shajahan new NSUF chair

METRO DESK

Mohammed Shajahan, a founder life member of the North South University Foundation (NSUF), was unanimously elected chairman of the board of governors of the foundation on Thursday.

He has been elected for the year 2011-12, says a press release.

He also served the NSUF as its chairman for the year 2003-04.

# Cancellation of PSC with US company demanded

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a discussion yesterday demanded immediate cancellation of the production-sharing contract (PSC) with US-based oil company ConocoPhillips for gas exploration in the Bay of Bengal.

Termining the contract as against national interest, they said if the contract is implemented, other contracts over gas blocks would also be done in the same way in future.

The National Committee to Protect Oil, Gas, Mineral Resources, Power, and Ports organised the discussion titled "Why the oil gas contract of the Bay of Bengal with ConocoPhillips is against national interest?"

at Mukti Bhaban in the city.

The government on June 16 inked the deal with ConocoPhillips for exploring oil and gas from two deep-sea blocks in the Bay.

Dhaka University economist MM Akash in his keynote paper said the contract has kept all scopes for ConocoPhillips to export gas.

Eng Sheikh Muhammad Shahidullah, the committee convener who presided over the discussion, said the country's asset is being given to foreign companies.

Prof Anu Muhammad, Prof Akmal Hossain, Nur Mohammad, Eng Enamul Haque, Abu Sayeed Khan, and Prof Nasima Akter also spoke.

# Stop Rajuk's parkside plots Residents urge govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Residents of Uttara Sector No-13 yesterday demanded the government stop allotting residential plots in the open space alongside the lone park in the neighbourhood.

At an "environmental rally" facilitated by Paribesh Bachao Andolan (Poba), they also demanded that the open place be attached to the park for its extension, as it is the only place for women and children and is getting more crowded everyday.

The inhabitants said Rajdhani Unnayan Kartripakkha (Rajuk) is going to allot residential plots in the open space, and if it does so, the lone place for the social entertainment of the sector will be destroyed and the environment of the entire area will be harmed.

Sector No-13 Welfare Society President Dr M Shahadat Ali; its General Secretary Dr Fazlul Haque; and Poba Chairman Abu Naser Khan spoke at the rally, participated by residents of other sectors and students of different schools.

**DHAKA TODAY**

**Conference**  
Bangla Academy will hold an international conference on literature. Time: 11:00am, Venue: The academy seminar room.

**Seminar**  
Manusher Jonno Foundation will hold a seminar. Time: 3:30pm, Venue: Jatiya Press Club.

**Rally**  
Seven progressive student organisations will hold a joint rally. Time: 4:30pm, Venue: TSC intersection, Dhaka University.

**Workshop**  
Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust (Blast) will organise a workshop. Time: 11:00 am, Venue: Biam Foundation.

**Dialogue**  
Bangladesh Resource Centre for

Indigenous Knowledge and Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon (Bapa) will jointly hold a climate dialogue. Time: 9:00am, Venue: Chhayanaut Sangskriti Bhaban.

**Roundtable**  
Association for Law Research and Human Rights will hold a roundtable discussion. Time: 10:00am, Venue: Cirdap auditorium.

**Launching**  
Centre for the Rehabilitation of the Paralysed (CRP) will hold a launching ceremony. Time: 10:00am, Venue: Central Shaheed Minar.

**Meeting**  
Bangladesh Mahila Parishad will hold a view-exchange meeting. Time: 3:30pm, Venue: Cirdap auditorium.

**Dialogue**  
Brac and Bangladesh Rice Foundation (BRF) will jointly hold a dialogue. Time: 9:30am, Venue: Brac Centre Inn.

The Daily Star Coming out tomorrow - Star Campus

## Linking Young Minds Together

The Daily Star offers campus based weekly magazine 'Star Campus' - the ultimate magazine for the young generation - a common platform for the college and university students and academicians - to share their ideas, thoughts, dreams, opinions and views. Star Campus is an endeavour to bring into the center stage the visionary aspects of our college and university students, alongside their lifestyle, cultural trends and their multidimensional talents. Star Campus is a magazine broadly based on campus life! It contains articles, academic news, achievements, travelogues, interviews, book reviews, quiz, milestones, academic tips, profiles of educational institutes, cultural and extra-curricular activities in campus, jokes, cartoons, photographs and much more. This is a magazine Of the Students, By the Students and For the Students. Star Campus helps link young minds together.

