

There are all kinds of vendors right outside the lake - from spice and fresh produce vendors to women selling clothes.

a relatively new addition. Just a couple of years back, there was no footbridge and I found it daunting to venture to the other side of the lake and walk by the 'Dinghy' boat club once the morning rush hour traffic started.

But this time I eagerly climb the stairs, get on the bridge and admire the scenery. It is summer and the vibrant *Krishnochuras* are in full bloom. The red and orange *Krishnochuras* are a bonus for me this year – I usually come in winter, so miss out seeing these gorgeous flowers! I click some photos and spot a couple of men on a boat peering through the dirty waters with great interest. One of the men picks up a plastic bottle and what looks to me from the bridge, also a polythene bag. I realise they are scavengers or garbage collectors who sift through trash to find items they can sell. One man with a beard and a *gamcha (scarf)* tied over his head interests me. I see him everyday and it is his attention to detail that makes me curious. He seems to spot something from a distance then hones in on it in a hawk-like pursuit and picks it up looking satisfied. For the next few days, I try to catch him to have a chat about what he finds, but the elusive man is either in the middle of the lake or directly across from me.



Men working out using simple exercise equipment at the Dhanmondi Lake.

I continue walking. Always on the lookout for interesting people, I come across another man, this time an educated looking man possibly in his late 60s. I have seen him on my last trips in winter. It is very easy to single him out amid the diverse morning crowd. In the past few years, I used to see him doing tai chi by the waters. Since tai chi is not a very common form of outdoor exercise in Dhaka, I noticed him with a mild curiosity. But it is not doing tai chi that makes him stand out. This person seems to come to the lake with a purpose each morning besides the obvious reason of getting some exercise. He sits with his gardening tools in the little green patch by the mosque and helps the 'malis' (gardeners) with their job and points out the spots they missed. I strike up a conversation with him. He is