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Cell phones so cheap!

Footpath techies meet demand of the poor

WASIM BIN HABIB

Do you know what happens to your old and broken mobile phones after you have tossed them in the bin? Or traded them off for some shiny aluminium pots for the kitchen? What happens to your phone after it is stolen?

Many of them actually find their way into display cases waiting for their next owner.

You can find that out if you take a stroll on the pavement just across the street from Nagar Bhaban of Dhaka South City Corporation in the capital. There goes on a thriving trade in mobile phones of well recognised brands: Nokia, Samsung, hTC, Sony, Micromax, Symphony, and even iPhone.

Hawkers with no formal training whatsoever give the often broken and heavily used phones another life with quick fixes, cannibalising parts from another phone.

They then sell them on the nearly half-a-kilometre stretch of the footpath. You will also find mobile phone accessories -- batteries, chargers, headphones, covers and flip cases -- in abundance.

Anyone could also sell their used mobile phones or other items there. A large number of stolen phones end up there too, said the hawkers.

The cheap prices attract people of the low-income group.

The prices of mobile phones start from Tk 100 and rise depending on quality. Some new smart phones are also there but they cost more.

The traders said they mostly buy old phones in bulk from Begum Bazar where all electronic goods and junk are available. The traders in Begum Bazar get the phones from several sources, like hawkers who sell kitchen utensils in exchange for old phones.

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Mobile phones and other electronic goods are displayed at a makeshift market on the footpath opposite the office of Dhaka South City Corporation. A very wide range of old, new and stolen products are available there at cheaper prices drawing in customers from lower-income groups.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Shahabuddin, shhh!

Acting anti-graft boss lashes out at Khaleda, TIB for concern over corruption spike

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

He is the acting chief of the graft watchdog. But his statement yesterday about BNP chief Khaleda Zia and the TIB sounded like a political leader bashing his rivals.

Shahabuddin does not hang back from launching counter-attacks against any criticism of the Anti-Corruption Commission. Like the government high-ups, he slammed the Transparency International Bangladesh for revealing the country's position in the global Corruption Perception Index.

"The former prime minister [Khaleda Zia] all of a sudden has started telling made-up stories about the ACC at different public meetings. But she doesn't say we had exonerated her [from a corruption charge] over the Bhairab bridge," he told a function at Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy in the capital.

The event was organised marking the International Anti-Corruption Day 2014. "You [Khaleda] term it a commission of giving clean chit [to accused], but it doesn't benefit you. You didn't see any corruption during the tenure of your government; you rather shelved it," added Shahabuddin.

He also doubted whether the TIB was serving the agenda of some quarters. "Whatever information you [TIB] sent [to Transparency International] has been reflected on from an international perspective. You are an enemy within," he said.

According to the TI's global Corruption Perception Index 2014, corruption



SEE PAGE 10 COL 5

Jubo Dal man shot dead in Laxmipur

Father blames police

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Noakhali

A Jubo Dal activist was killed in what police claimed was a gunfight between notorious Jisan Bahini and law enforcers in Latifpur of Laxmipur Sadar upazila on Monday night.

The dead, Aziz Ahmed Rony, 30, of Dewpara village in the upazila, was the bodyguard of Jisan, police said adding that three cops were also injured.

However, Rony's father Makbul Ahmed alleged that the Detective Branch of police picked up his son from a shop at Palwan Bazar on Monday afternoon.

Later, they shot his son dead.

SEE PAGE 10 COL 4

Every day human rights day

Slogan questions reality

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Amid growing concerns over abductions of many, allegedly by law enforcers, the country observes the United Nations Human Rights Day today.

The UN General Assembly proclaimed December 10 as Human Rights Day in 1950. This year's slogan -- Human Rights 365 -- encompasses the idea that every day is a Human Rights Day.

To mark the day, several government and non-government organisations have arranged different programmes, including discussions, rallies and seminars in the capital and elsewhere in the country.

Maulik Adhikar Suraksha Committee, a platform for rights activists, has arranged a discussion in the capital's Jatiya Press Club this morning. Later, the

SEE PAGE 10 COL 2

Delay due to ministry

Says EC, stresses demarcation of divided Dhaka before DCC polls

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Election Commission yesterday blamed the LGRD Ministry again for delaying the elections to Dhaka City Corporations, saying the ministry did not complete boundary demarcation which is a must for holding the long delayed polls.

"We have repeatedly sent letters to the ministry asking it to complete the demarcation. But the ministry kept saying it was working on it," Chief Election Commissioner Kazi Rakibuddin Ahmad told reporters at the EC's media centre.

His statement came a day after the Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina announced that the long overdue elections to the bifurcated DCC would take place early next year.

"We want to hold the election in the shortest possible time because the issue has been pending for a long time. The major obstacle will be removed if demarcation is completed," the CEC added.

If there is a pressure now from the government high-ups, the demarcation might be

completed immediately, he said, adding "After delimitation is done, we will announce polls schedule keeping sufficient time in our hand."

Asked if it was possible to hold the DCC elections in next January, the CEC replied, "Why should we hold elections by January? Time must be given to us ... we will have to avoid public examination period [SSC exams begin in January]."

Meanwhile, BNP acting secretary general Mirza Fakhruddin Alamgir yesterday said the government is talking about holding DCC polls with an intention to thwart BNP's anti-government movement next year.

"The government did not hold DCC elections for long. It wants to divert people's attention from opposition's upcoming movement in the name of DCC polls," he told reporters at a city hospital.

Awami League insiders said the announcement of holding DCC elections would gear up party activities in the capital and party leaders interested in taking part in the polls will stage showdown in a bid to get

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The Daily Star

Integral Energy Limited

ONLINE POLL
Do you support the University Grants Commission's (UGC) initiative to bring all state-run colleges offering graduate and postgraduate degrees under the authority of public universities?

Yes (67%)

No (33%)

TOTAL VOTES: 187

TODAY'S POLL
Do you think that the Dhaka city corporations (DCC) election would be held next year?

PLEASE CAST YOUR VOTE AT www.thedailystar.net

PRAYER TIMING December 10		
Fajr	5:15	5:50
Zohr	12:45	1:15
Asr	3:45	4:00
Maghrib	5:19	5:22
Esha	7:00	7:30



Chinese millionaire Xiong Shuihua, inset, built luxury homes for the poor of Xiongkeng village in the city of Xinyu where he grew up.

Millionaire does care for his roots

MAIL ONLINE

A millionaire Chinese businessman has bulldozed the wooden huts and muddy roads where he grew up - and built luxury homes for the people who lived there.

Xiong Shuihua was born in Xiongkeng village in the city of Xinyu, southern China and said that his family had always been well looked after and supported by residents in his childhood.

So when the 54-year-old ended up making millions in the steel industry he decided to repay the favour - for free.

The business tycoon decided to return to the

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