

| SHUTTERSTORIES |



BETWEEN YOU AND HER

Your limit is the shore, stand there, feel the songs sung by the ocean. She will touch you in the form of waves, you will be loved as the wind makes you embrace yourself. Between you and her, there is only clouds and sands.

PHOTOS and TEXT : DARSHAN CHAKMA



| STRIKING A CHORD |

RAMBLINGS OF A DHAKA DWELLER

ELITA KARIM

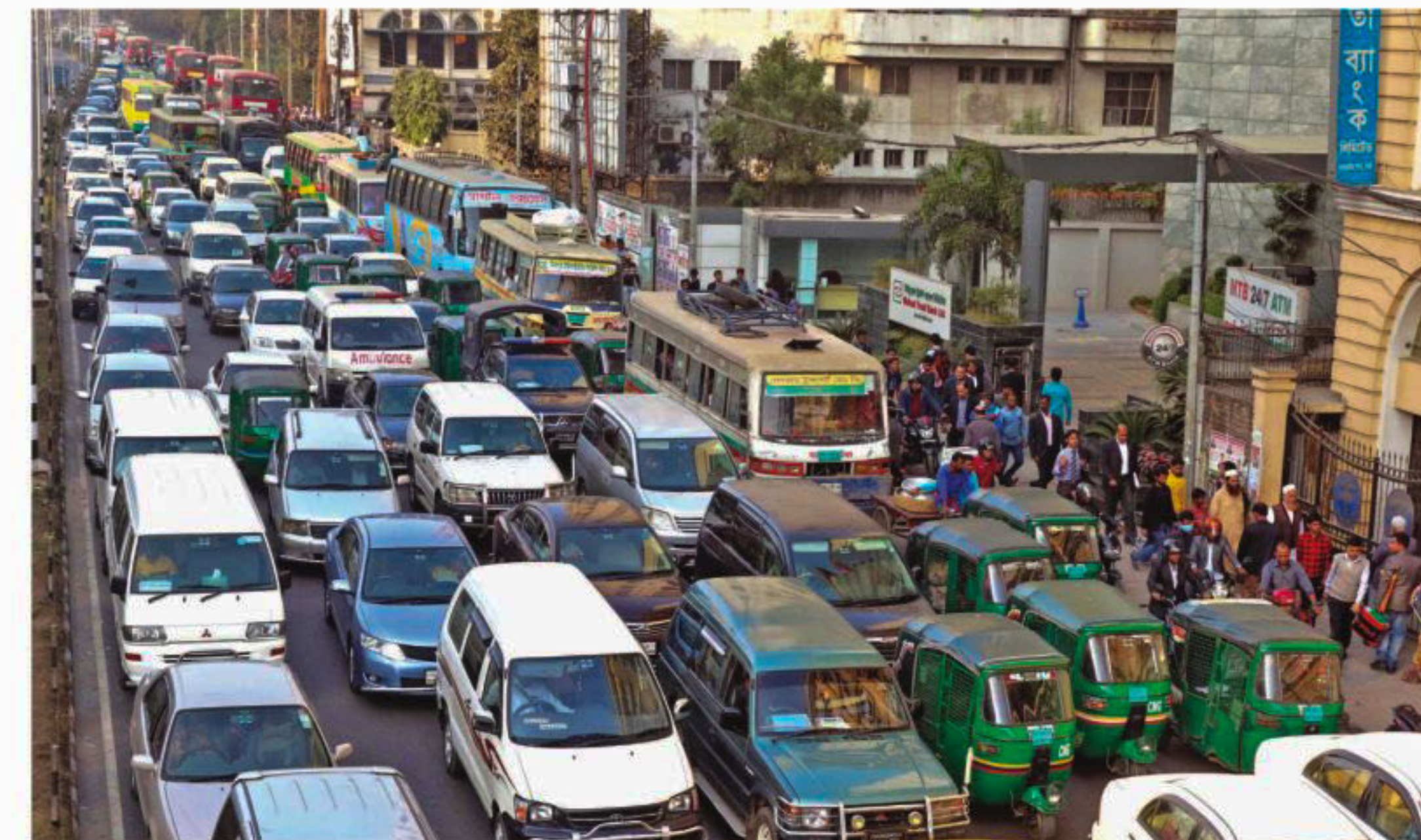
PHOTOS: STAR FILE

Last week was a nightmare for Dhaka dwellers after a long time. With the annual Iztema and all kinds of political processions, the city was stuck in a gruesome gridlock. Not only did commuters suffer simply trying to reach their offices, sadly and scarily enough, honking ambulances slowly died down on the roads when nobody could give them the space to move forward.

According to reports, the roads leading to the meeting venue were choked with processions by AL activists. The party organised the rally to mark the Homecoming Day of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. The gridlock on Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue was so bad that even the motorcade of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina had to take the wrong lane on way to the meeting venue as the left lane was clogged with vehicles.

"I needed to get my certificates from NSU, located in Basundhara," says Sarah Alam Bhuiyan, a Bangladeshi-British citizen, currently in the capital on Christmas break. "I think I wasted at least 4 days of my 14-day vacation, trying to get in touch with the authorities, reaching the university and then returning home. I think it's high time the university went digital. That's the only alternative I can think of now."

An average 17-year-old in another country can be considered advanced, exposed and faster as compared to other young teenagers in Bangladesh for many reasons; being stuck in traffic jams is definitely one of them. While the young man here struggles his way from home to classes and back safely, the youth



elsewhere makes sure that he or she hangs out with friends, reads a book, finishes with a part time job, maybe play a little bit of football and so much more – and all this after attending a day in school.

For more than four years, the flyovers in Moghbazaar have been under construction, adding further to the gridlock and choked roads. School children, families, shop keepers and other professionals go through a daily war in the area just to get their jobs done on time. According to reports, the designs of the flyovers have been changed at least 122 times. "I wish I could stay indoors forever, but of course that is not possible," says 37-year-old Mohammad Khurshed, born and brought up in Moghbazaar. "I have to drop and pick my children to and from school. I also look after my uncle's grocery store on the next road. I don't take a CNG or a rickshaw if it is not too important. I prefer to walk. Even then, I seem to be jumping over cars, stepping on dirty puddles, trying to bring my children safely back through the unkempt and unsafe roads."

One wonders if the flyovers will actually save the city from being choked up again. Because of the centralised nature of the national administration, everyone ends up looking for jobs, better medical facilities and better educational institutes in Dhaka. As a result, the population keeps on growing, vehicles increase and so does the movement in the capital.

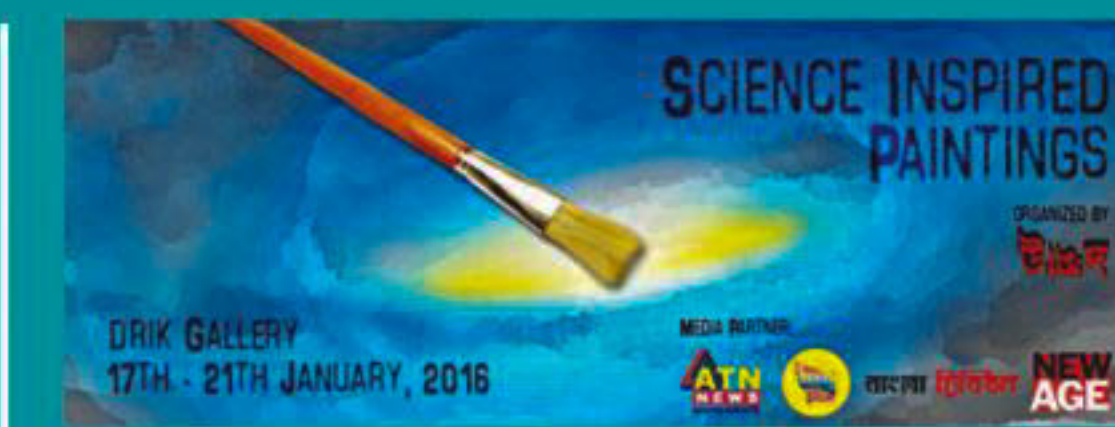
"I don't let my daughters use the bus to go places. Instead I encourage them to either take a CNG run auto-rickshaw or to move about in groups," says Shazia Amir Tayyab, a banker, living in Bashabo. "Buses are not safe. See, when I was as young as they were, I would take the bus to class, and even did a part time job as a copywriter in a private agency in Motijheel. I used public transport everywhere. Yes, I did have my days when I would be shooed off by conductors after office hours so that the men could be fit in comfortable. But how long do we have to go through this? It has been years, but public transport is simply not safe."

At the end of the day, what do we actually crave for? A safe transport system, to make sure that the manholes are not left open, have our administration maintain our sewerage system to avoid water logging and of course – to reach office and classes on time – too much to ask for in one lifetime?

ABOUT TOWN



SOUNDS OF LIFE
Date & Time: January 15, 2016, from 3.30- 9pm
Venue: EMK Centre, House 5, Road 16 (New) 27 (Old), 9th floor, Midas Centre, Dhanmondi.
Hosted by- Live Square Entertainment and EMK Centre
For tickets, visit- <https://www.facebook.com/events/1686115515005138/>



SCIENCE INSPIRED PAINTINGS
Date & Time: January 17-21, 2016, at 3.00 pm
Venue: Drik Gallery, House 58, Road 15A (New), Dhanmondi Residential Area, Dhaka 1209, Bangladesh, Dhaka, Bangladesh
Created by- Unmad
For more information, visit- <https://www.facebook.com/events/203708663300165/>



AUSTRALIAN EDUCATION EXPO- 2016
Date & Time: January 20, 2016, from 9 am- 5pm
Venue: The Westin, Dhaka, Plot 1, Road 45, Gulshan Avenue, Gulshan 2
Organized by: Prime Foreign Education Consultant (PFEC)
Call for Registration: 01730785462, 01730785458
For more information, visit- <https://www.facebook.com/events/1654697474748107/>