



PARKED ON PAVEMENTS

THE footpaths of Dhaka often have a lot fewer feet on them. Pavements across the city are turned into makeshift shops, parking spots and even car repair shops. In a city already choked by lack of space, whatever little room remains for pedestrians is encroached upon. Cars and bikes are seen parking on the footpaths, even if there is a sign explicitly warning against such actions. Shops are set up forcing pedestrians on the road and right in front of traffic. The culture of impunity and a sense of perverse entitlement exacerbate the situation. While there are laws, no one is around to enforce them. The lack of parking space is another issue. Commercial buildings rise towards the sky with the fanciest of shops and offices generally forgoing the need for providing designated parking. Some rent out whatever space they have. Cars parked haphazardly narrow even the most important of thoroughfares and all this goes on right under the noses of law enforcers. The law enforcers slap fines and tow vehicles but it is business as usual moments later. Pictures were taken from Bijoy Nagar, Gulistan, near FDC, Tejgaon, Karwan Bazar, Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue, Malibagh, Rajarbagh and Mohakhali. The Daily Star and other media outlets have been running reports on illegal parking and occupation of footpaths for years, yet the situation does not change. Measures to stop illegal parking have been scanty. Hardly any multistoried car parks have been built and only a handful of basements of commercial buildings have been cleared for parking cars.

Photo: ANISUR RAHMAN, PRABIR DAS

