

INDIRA ROAD Brisk business on footpath

|| MATHEWS CHIRAN ||



**DHAKA
VIBE**

The sidewalk beside Indira Road has been turned into a thriving market, where one can buy clothes, ornaments, daily essentials and even chicken.

PHOTO: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED

Farmgate hardly requires an introduction. Every day, vehicles of various shapes and sizes stop haphazardly to pick up or drop off passengers in the area, while people remain busy walking in all directions or rushing through or shoving each other to go about their destinations.

Amid the commotion, many also find time to buy something from vendors selling anything and everything. From glittering trinkets to handbags, watches, clothes, perfumes, fruits, food and even livestock -- if you crave it, you will find it in Farmgate.

Every day, hundreds of vendors set up their stalls to sell products. The area buzzes with activity way beyond the "traditional" nine to five working hours, and the madness escalates on the weekends.

This sprawling market, set up occupying the footpath beside Indira Road, has been thriving for years.

Made of bamboo, wood and plastic sheet, most makeshift shops cover almost the entire width of the footpath along Indira Road -- from near Tejgaon College to TNT field.

In some places, vendors have left a narrow gap in the middle of the sidewalk for customers to shop around.

"I've been commuting through the road for years. The situation has remained

the same. Every day, women, children and the elderly are risking their lives and walking on the street amid traffic," Ratna Begum, a job holder, told The Daily Star recently.

Many others, seen walking on the road, echoed her. Hiding identity, this correspondent spoke to several vendors in the area.

They said they have been doing business for years. They

45, said, "I have been doing business for over 14 years. My son now helps me run it. I pay Tk 300 every day to a lineman. We pay the money and police do not harass us."

T-shirt seller Sumon, 20, also said he pays Tk 200 to stay on the footpath.

There are at least 200 vendors in the area, which means on an average if Tk 200 each is collected from them per day, the

enforcers," he said.

The official said some people must have encouraged vendors to occupy the sidewalk time and again. "Maybe they are paying for that... you need to inquire about it," he told this correspondent.

Contacted, Jane Alam Munshi, officer-in-charge of Sher-e-Bangla Nagar Police Station, said, "I don't know who they [vendors] pay money to. We are not involved in any such activity."

"I tried my best to keep the footpath free. It's not possible for us to oust them alone. There are political leaders; city corporation, Tejgaon College and market authorities, if I say anything about the issue they might take it otherwise," he said.

When asked how law enforcers were able to keep hawkers off the footpath during the Commonwealth Parliament Conference in 2017, the OC said, "I joined in January this year. My seniors can tell you about this."

Indira Road falls under ward-27 of DNCC.

Contacted, Councillor Faridur Rahman Khan claimed that number of hawkers in the area used to be more than 2,000. "I was able to reduce it to 260 gradually," he said.

He said the caretaker government gave cards to 300

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2



claimed that they pay a certain amount -- Tk 100 to Tk 300 depending on size of their shop -- to run their operation without facing any hassle from law enforcers.

Abdur Rahim, 55, has been selling peanuts in the area for almost 12 years. He said he pays Tk 100 per day to a "lineman".

Food vendor Jabbar Ali,

amount comes up to Tk 12 lakh per month.

Wishing anonymity, a senior official of Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC) said they had tried to evict illegal shops many times, but to no avail. "They continue to encroach upon footpath and streets, despite our drives in cooperation with law



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport yesterday before leaving for New York to attend the 74th session of United Nations General Assembly.

PHOTO: PTD

'There is no planet B' Oli Ahmed demands arrest of JU VC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Hundreds of children from different schools and colleges in Dhaka staged a demonstration on Manik Mia Avenue yesterday, urging world leaders to act against climate change.

They also formed a human chain and brought out a procession there, expressing solidarity with the "Global Climate Strike" in response to the call of Swedish climate activist Greta Thunberg.

As part of the movement, green activists, NGO workers and students formed human chains at several places in the capital to generate awareness on climate crisis.

Criticising developed nations for their role, green activists called for reducing carbon emissions to limit the global warming to 1.5 degree Celsius. They also sought an active role of world leaders in this regard.

Save the Children in Bangladesh and Green Saver Association jointly organised the event, engaging children and youth platforms including Girl Guides and Rover Scout Bangladesh.

Students at the event declared "climate emergency" in Bangladesh.

On August 20, 2018, Swedish climate activist Greta Thunberg, then in ninth grade, decided not to attend school until the 2018 Sweden general election on September 9 after heat waves and wildfires in Sweden. Holding a placard that read, "School strike for climate", she staged a protest outside the Swedish parliament.

The school strike for climate, also known as Fridays for Future (FFF), is now an international movement of school students who take time off from class to participate in demonstrations to demand action to prevent further global warming and climate change.

The movement is not only spreading among children around the world but also at policy-making levels in the countries most vulnerable to climate change.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) President Oli Ahmed yesterday demanded immediate arrest of Jahangirnagar University Vice Chancellor Prof Farzana Islam for her alleged involvement in corruption and bribery.

He demanded that those involved with her be also arrested and the others working behind the scene be exposed.

The senior politician made the remarks at a press conference on current affairs, organised by "Jatiya Mukta Mancha", a coalition of political parties, at LDP office in the capital.

"It is unthinkable that the chief of one of the highest academic institutions is involved in bribery," said Oli.

"The government is saying that they will take steps if there are proofs. How many proofs do you need?" he said.

"The whole world has heard the phone

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2

Mozambique road crash kills 2 Bangladeshi siblings

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two Bangladeshi siblings were killed and three passengers injured in a road crash in Mozambique on Thursday night.

The deceased are Md Al Amin, 23, and his brother Md Arafat, 21, said their father Md Hossain.

Hossain said Al Amin and Arafat had flown to Mozambique from Dhaka on August 13 and 31. The accident happened when they were travelling to South Africa's Johannesburg where their elder brother Nasir lives.

DHAKA TODAY

WORKSHOP

SDGs 5 and 16: Gender Equality and Access to Justice
Organiser: BLAST
Venue: Bishwo Shahitto Kendro
Time: 9am

CONFERENCE

Global Peace Summit in Bangladesh
Organiser: BDSIF and Highway IT
Venue: BICC, Agargaon
Time: 9am

DIALOGUE

Menstrual Hygiene Management: Scenario, Policy and Way Forward
Venue: Wreetu, Road-1, House -120, Banani
Time: 10am

LAUNCHING CEREMONY

Digital Talking Book (for women with disabilities)
Venue: EMK Center
Time: 4pm

TRAINING

Health Safety and Environment Management
Organiser: BJTI
Venue: Bangladesh-Japan Training Institute, Hatirpool
Time: 9am

WORKSHOP

Gender Sensitivity in Workplace
Venue: EMK Center
Time: 10am

Enabling future leaders to reach their full potential

International liaison officer of Chevening Scholarship Programme in town

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

The UK is encouraging people, who have potential for leadership and making a difference in their own communities, to study for master's degrees in UK universities under Chevening Scholarship.

"We are looking for people with leadership potentials who would go to the UK, study there and take back what they have learned to make a difference in their own communities," said Rebekah Palmer, international liaison officer of Chevening Scholarship Programme.

Interested individuals, of any age, with at least two years of work experience can apply for the 2020 scholarship that's open until November 5, she told The Daily Star and a news agency, during her maiden visit to Dhaka on September 17-18, when she attended events to encourage Bangladeshis to apply for the scholarship.

Chevening Scholarship, funded by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and partner organisations, offers the opportunity to study for a one-year master's degree at any of the UK's leading universities.

The scholarships are awarded to outstanding established or emerging

leaders across a wide range of fields, including politics, governance, business, media, environment, civil society and academia, among others. Chevening scholars come from over 160 countries and territories worldwide. Those interested can find more details at www.chevening.org/ apply.

Since 1983, around 300 Bangladeshis have studied in the UK under the Chevening Scholarship Programme. From around the world, the number is some 50,000. This year, 13 Chevening scholars from Bangladesh were selected to study in the UK.

"Chevening is not only academic. The scholars can study in world class universities. They can avail various opportunities to network widely. When they finish, they become members of an alumni network of 50,000 worldwide," said Palmer.

Many of the Chevening scholars are chief justices, heads of states and governments, professors, community leaders who are making great difference in their communities, she said.

Chevening Scholarship is a demonstration of UK's desire to build powerful relations with other countries and people around the world, Palmer added.



Rebekah Palmer



Onlookers in front of the capital's Fakirerpool Young Men's Club yesterday after the law enforcers sealed it off on Wednesday and arrested a Jubo League leader for running a casino in the building.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

