

Don't play and ruin the grass!

Basabo park only stays open for 5-7hrs a day, depriving residents

DIPAN NANDY

For a long time, locals of the capital's Basabo, both young and old, had been longing for a park that would fulfil all their leisure needs.

And Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC) delivered. After two years of development work, authorities were done renovating a park in 2019 in the area. In November of that year, then DSCC mayor Sayeed Khokon inaugurated it for the residents.

However, locals are still being deprived of a place to enjoy their free time.

The park stays open for only five hours a day for those who want to play, seven hours for people who just want to use the walkway. Not only that, it also stays closed on Sunday. But why? Well, according to DSCC officials, the park stays open for such a short time because they want to keep the field, and its grass, in good condition.

Locals are not buying this reasoning. They say that such maintenance is just an excuse to keep the park closed. Resident Akbar Ali said there were no fences around the park before development work began. It was open to the public all the time. Residents used to play in the field all day and even at night.

But during modernisation, metal fences closed the park off.

Development work started in August 2017, through various infrastructural projects in areas under DSCC. After inauguration, the park was renamed as "Shaheed Alauddin Park".

During a recent visit, this correspondent saw various instructions hung at the field's main entrance.

"From Monday to Saturday, everyone is requested to use the field from 5:00am to 8:00am and from 4:00pm to 6:00pm, and the walkway can be used till 8:00pm. The park will be closed on Sunday for maintenance."

Locals say the field stays open for around two and a half hours in the morning and two to three hours in the afternoon.

Authorities say expensive grass has been planted in the field. So, if the field is used round the clock, its condition will be similar to that of the "seashore", a place covered with dirt and sand.

According to the authorities concerned, development work cost about Tk 4.5 crore, but so far, no organisation has been given the responsibility for maintenance. For the last two years, locals and DSCC staff have been looking after the field.

DSCC's Zone-2 oversaw the development work.

Contacted, Saiful Islam, executive engineer of Zone-2, said after the work was completed, maintenance was delegated to the corporation's property department in March 2019. Contacted, DSCC Chief Property Officer Russell Sabrin said responsibility has been given to the corporation's environmental circle. It maintains the field through the local ward councillor and residents.

Khairul Baker, the environment circle's superintendent engineer, said he has assigned a few gardeners to maintain the field.



This photo of Shaheed Alauddin Park in Basabo was taken last Friday at 11:00am. What's unusual is that, given it's a weekly holiday, this field was supposed to be buzzing with the laughter and playfulness of local children. However, as the authorities want to keep the park in "good condition", it remains open only for five to seven hours a day, depriving locals of their recreational needs.

PHOTO: DIPAN NANDY



A trifecta of DISASTER

Reckless driving, unfit vehicles and mismanagement behind alarming rise in road accidents, say probe reports, experts



The wreckage of a runaway bus that hit a staff bus of Bangladesh Atomic Energy Commission and killed six people, including the driver, on Dhaka-Aricha highway in Savar's Boliarpur on June 5. It also hit two other vehicles.

FILE PHOTO

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

Four scientific officers of Bangladesh Atomic Energy Commission (BAEC) met their untimely demise in Savar. The lives of three couples and three others were snatched away in Gopalganj, and five of a family perished in Rajbari.

All these tragedies were the result of gruesome road accidents.

Like these three incidents, several other major road crashes took place just last month.

Reckless driving, unfit vehicles and small vehicles on highways are the visible reasons behind these incidents, according to

probe and media reports.

But, experts said anarchy and mismanagement in the transport sector, which continue unabated, are the root causes.

At least 2,785 people were killed and 3,769 injured in 2,261 crashes in the first five months of this year, according to Road Safety Foundation, which prepared the list using media reports.

The actual number of accidents and deaths are likely to be much higher, as many go unreported.

FATAL ACCIDENTS ALL TOO COMMON

Six people, including four scientific officers of BAEC, one

of whom was a pregnant woman, were killed in on Dhaka-Aricha highway in Savar on June 5.

A video of the crash, which went viral on social media, shows multiple collisions involving buses and a truck. At one point in the video, a bus hits the road divider, breaks it and hits the BAEC bus, causing the fatalities.

Later, it was found that the last time the offending bus's fitness certificate was updated was in 2014, and the last time taxes were paid was in 2015. These are supposed to be renewed annually.

The vehicle did not even have a route permit, Sazzadur Rahman, an inspector of Bangladesh Road

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20 hospitalised with dengue

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least 20 people with dengue fever were admitted to hospitals in the country during 24 hours till 8:00am yesterday.

Of them, only one was from outside the capital, according to the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS).

With this, the total number of hospitalised dengue patients rose to 90.

Dhaka is at risk of a major dengue outbreak this year compared to the last couple of years, as clear, stagnant water, the breeding ground for Aedes mosquitoes, at under-construction buildings is abundant this time around.

The situation came to light after the DGHS conducted a pre-monsoon survey between March 23 and April 4. The survey found three DSCC wards to be at "high risk" and 10 at "medium risk" of an outbreak. Nine wards in DNCC are at medium risk.

Forex booth at Dhaka airport

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Probashi Kalyan Bank yesterday launched a new foreign currency exchange booth at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport in the capital.

Expatriates' Welfare Minister Imran Ahmad formally inaugurated the booth as chief guest during a ceremony held at the airport, said a press release of the ministry.

The booth has been set up beside the expatriates' welfare desk of the ministry at the departure terminal. At the new booth, outbound migrant workers will be able to exchange taka for different foreign currencies including US dollar, said Kamal Hossain, senior principal officer at the bank's head office. The bank has another booth at the airport's arrival where home-bound migrant workers can exchange foreign currencies for taka, he told this newspaper over phone.

PRAYER
TIMING
JUNE 12



	Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
Azan	4-05	12-45	5-00	6-50	8-15
Jamaat	4-40	1-15	5-15	6-55	8-45
SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION					

‘The bus had no route permit’

Says Rab after arresting owner, driver of vehicle that crushed constable to death

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The bus that crushed a police constable five days ago in Dhaka did not have any route permit, said Rapid Action Battalion yesterday.

Rab made the statement after arresting the bus owner Alam alias Khoka (40) and its driver Zakir Hossain (40).

"Khoka was arrested in Savar while Zakir in Brahmanbaria," Commander Khandaker Al Moin, director of Rab's Legal and Media wing, told a press conference.

Constable Korban Ali Hossain (35) was killed after the bus of Welcome Paribahan hit his motorcycle in Bangla Motor area on June 6 morning.

Earlier on June 5, five scientists and officials of the Bangladesh Atomic Energy Commission were killed in a collision with a bus at Baliarpur in Savar. The fitness

of the bus expired in 2014 and its route permit ended the following year.

The Rab official said owner of the Welcome Paribahan bus claimed that he had applied for a route permit, but to no avail.

The bus was plying the roads in the capital for two years without a route permit.

According to Rab, Zakir was driving the bus on Dhaka-Savar route for 20 days on a daily contract of Tk 2,500. In addition, he had to pay Tk 1,300 as line fee. After paying the Tk 3,800, the driver and helper would share the rest of the day's earnings.

The Rab official said the bus was unfit. On the day of the incident, driver Zakir was speeding towards Bangla Motor when the bus hit the policeman's motorbike.

"After the accident, he [Zakir] hid in a nearby house for about 15 minutes. He

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PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

A father-daughter duo inspects a breed of mango tree exhibited at the National Tree Plantation Campaign and Tree Fair. Inaugurated on June 5, the fair has been organised in the field next to the capital's Bangabandhu International Conference Center at Sher-e-Bangla Nagar. This photo was taken yesterday.

DU holds ‘Gha’ unit entry test

UNB, Dhaka

Dhaka University (DU) yesterday held the admission test of "Gha" unit under the Faculty of Social Science for the 2021-22 academic session.

The test was held at designated examination centres across the eight divisions. The test began at 11:00am.

"This year, we decided to hold the exams in all eight divisions of the country to minimise the sufferings of the candidates and their parents," said DU Vice-Chancellor Prof Akhtaruzzaman after visiting an exam centre of social science faculty building.

Asked about QS University ranking position, he said, "We don't pay much attention

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