

Chaotic crowding at Dhaka airport

Relatives swarm arrival, departure zones despite entry restrictions, disrupting passenger movement

RASHIDUL HASAN

The arrival canopy and departure driveway areas at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport (HSIA) have turned chaotic as large numbers of people crowd the spaces to see off or welcome relatives, disrupting passenger movement and creating traffic congestion.

In August, the airport authorities instructed that a maximum of two people would be allowed to accompany passengers at the departure driveway and arrival canopy. But during recent visits to Terminal 1 and Terminal 2, it was seen that no one followed the rule.

The situation worsens when several flights land within a short time, as many visitors flock to the canopy area, often crossing the security fence. Despite signboards at both entrances prohibiting the entry of co-passengers and visitors, few pay attention.

Security personnel were seen making repeated announcements, urging visitors to give way to passengers and vehicles, but people rarely moved

until they had received or seen off relatives.

Visitors swarmed the areas like bees after flights landed, with some even waiting at the departure driveway until planes took off. Many arriving passengers boarded waiting vehicles directly from the canopy, but the overflow of visitors often turned the space into a marketplace, disrupting smooth exit and adding to congestion.

Syed Ali, who came from Pabna with five relatives to receive his uncle, said he felt it was necessary to be there.

Another visitor, Rabeya Shimu from Rajshahi, who also came with four relatives, said relatives from abroad feel displeased if no one comes to receive them, though she admitted the environment would improve if visitor numbers were controlled.

On average, 160 to 165 international flights operate daily from HSIA, which has a capacity of eight million passengers a year but handled 12.5 million last year.

Around 30,000 passengers travel through the

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Visitors continue to swarm the departure driveway and arrival canopy areas at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport, hindering smooth passenger movement. Although the airport authorities have instructed that only two persons may accompany a passenger, most people ignore the rule. The photos were taken recently.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

Playground lost to seized vehicles

Section of Mirpur's Golartek field remains occupied by police for over a decade

DIPAN NANDY

Years go by, vehicles come and go, and assurances are made one after another. Yet the Golartek playground in Mirpur-1 has not been freed from occupation.

For more than a decade, Darus Salam Police Station has occupied part of the field with seized vehicles.

Covering four acres, this is the largest playground under Dhaka North City Corporation and is locally known as "Golartek Math".

On August 23, 2008, seven new police stations, including Darus Salam Police Station, were formed by breaking up Mirpur Police Station.

Residents complain that two years after the Darus Salam station was established, seized vehicles began filling the Golartek field, a process that has continued for over a decade.

Although DNCC administration and locals have repeatedly demanded that the field be freed of vehicles, the police have only given assurances without implementation.

Police officials say the vehicles are stored there as case exhibits. Since the station has no space of its own, the vehicles will be removed once



alternative land is found. They said they have written to the city corporation requesting land, but no space has been allocated.

A recent visit showed the southwest section of the field occupied by more than 10 trucks, about a dozen buses, along with CNG-run auto-rickshaws, minibuses, private cars, pickup vans, human haulers, motorcycles, and rickshaws – totalling over 50 vehicles.

On the other side are the GBHB Club and the office of Suchana Cooperative Society. Next to them, a large portion

has been taken up by a permanent badminton court fenced with nets.

Amrita Roy, a local, said, "No one comes to play on that side because of the vehicles. I've been seeing these cars for six to seven years. Who should we complain to? What's the use?"

An Ansar member, responsible for the field's security for the past year, said, "These cars belong to Darus Salam Police Station."

Rasel Ahmed Rakib, a first-year student at Mohammadpur Government College who comes to play at the field, said,

Police officials say the vehicles are stored there as case exhibits. Since the station has no space of its own, the vehicles will be removed once alternative land is found. They said they have written to the city corporation requesting land, but no space has been allocated.

"There are no playgrounds left in Mirpur. Police are supposed to be friends of the people,

but if they occupy our spaces, where will people go? We want a field to play on."

Altaf Hossain, a student at St Joseph Higher Secondary School, said, "After the police station was set up, cars started entering this field one after another. This is a playground, not police property. There's space at the Darus Salam Zone Assistant Commissioner's office nearby -- they should keep the cars there. Why in our field?"

Contacted, Deputy Commissioner of Police (Mirpur division) Maksudur Rahman said, "These vehicles are not police property; they are case exhibits. Exhibits are a matter for the court."

"We're forced to put these cars here because our police station building is also in a rented house. If our land is allocated, if the police station goes to the new building, there will be no problem," he said.

DNCC Administrator Mohammad Azaz said, "We have notified the police station about removing their dumping station from the field. Discussions are ongoing. We hope to take strict decisions on this matter soon."

"Once the police remove the vehicles from the field, we will renovate the entire playground," he said.

Asia's top editors in Seoul for ANN meet, HIT Forum

THE KOREA HERALD

Top editors and publishers from 20 media outlets across 19 Asian countries are convening in Seoul this week for the annual board meeting of the Asia News Network, which will be held in conjunction with Today's 2025 Korea Herald HIT Forum.

Founded in 1999, ANN has worked to amplify Asia's voice in global discourse through joint reporting and closer cooperation among member newsrooms.

Its annual board meeting rotates among member countries, and this year's session takes place in Seoul against the backdrop of President Lee Jae Myung's new administration and the upcoming Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation summit in Gyeongju, North Gyeongsang Province.

Ahead of the meeting, visiting editors toured the headquarters of Hybe, the K-pop agency behind global sensation BTS, and the Samsung Innovation Museum yesterday to gain firsthand insight into Korean companies' innovation strategies and the global appeal of K culture.

Today, ANN delegates will also join the 2025 Korea Herald HIT Forum as speakers. Under the theme "Asia Dialogue: Shifting Trade Order and Regional Solidarity," they will discuss pressing trade and security challenges, as well as the significance of Korea hosting this year's APEC summit.

"At a time when many nations are grappling with trade frictions, it is highly meaningful that Asia's leading editors are coming together in Seoul to seek solidarity," said Choi Jin-young, CEO of Herald Media Group.

"We hope this forum will help elevate regional attention on the APEC summit."



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When a party's activities are banned, the question arises whether the ban is permanent or temporary. I don't see any possibility that the ban on Awami League activities will be lifted soon.

ASIF NAZRUL
Law Adviser



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Some countries want Hasina in power so they can keep Bangladesh under their control forever. Why is there unrest in the hills during puja? Why has the unrest suddenly been created there? This is a planned move.

RUHUL KABIR RIZVI
BNP Senior Joint Secretary General



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Out of around 35,000 Durga Puja mandaps, sabotage attempts were reported in 49. These were carried out by a few cowards with a sick mindset. Legal action has been taken in every case.

AKM SHAHIDUR RAHMAN
Rab Director General



Metal rods protrude hazardously from a road divider as a car drives by. Dhaka South City Corporation has demolished the divider to build a U-turn under the Swamibag section of the Mayor Hanif Flyover, without taking any precautionary measures to shield the area from vehicles or pedestrians. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

Prioritise road safety in election manifestos

Nirapad Sarak Chai urges political parties

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Nirapad Sarak Chai (Nischa) yesterday urged all political parties to prioritise road safety in their upcoming election manifestos to ensure long-term national commitment.

At a press conference at Jatiya Press Club, the organisation also called for forming a separate Road Safety Unit in every educational institution, similar to Girl Guides or Scouts, so students can be educated on safe road use and take part in awareness activities.

Founded in 1993, Nischa is a non-political, voluntary social movement advocating safer roads across the country. In the absence of Ilias Kanchan, veteran actor and founder of Nischa, who is now in the UK for treatment, the demands were read out by founding member Liton Ershad.

Liton said road safety challenges are too complex for the government alone to solve and require the involvement of national and international organisations, institutions and experts.

While the Road Transport Act 2018 introduced some positive measures, he noted that it still has many shortcomings.

He stressed that tackling five key risk factors – speeding, not wearing standard helmets, not using seatbelts, driving under the influence, and lack of child restraints – along with adopting the Safe System Approach, could make roads truly safe.

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