

free spirit

TRINO

CITY BIKE



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Jan-Feb-Mar 2011



Dhaka : City of Bikes?
Lessons from the Dutch
Bike-lane : Bongshal
Sustainable Urban Transport
Clemon Ride for Green
Feasts at Old Dhaka
Untrue

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Save THE Poles

NORTH POLE • SOUTH POLE
MOUNT EVEREST

MODERN DAY EXPLORER ERIC LARSEN TRAVELED TO THE NORTH POLE, SOUTH POLE AND THE SUMMIT OF EVEREST ALL IN ONE YEAR. THE 'SAVE THE POLES' EXPEDITION TO THESE LAST FROZEN PLACES IN ATTEMPT TO TELL HIS AMAZING STORY WHILE PROMOTING CLEAN ENERGY SOLUTIONS TO THE PROBLEM OF CLIMATE CHANGE.

ERIC IS SHARING HIS STORY FOR THE FIRST TIME ONLY FOR TRINO READERS!

IN THE NEXT ISSUE!

PHOTO.TEXT. SAVE THE POLES LOGO © ERIC LARSEN



TRINO/ERIC/JAN/2011



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EDITORIAL

Biking in Bangladesh especially in cities, is that an adventure or does it require being an adventurer? With the high price of fuel and its shortages, more people are getting into riding a bicycle to work or to run errands even in Bangladesh from mega city like Dhaka to very rural places. Bicycling is an excellent, low-cost, low-impact way to exercise, save money and get around town. And bicycling is fun. How many activities offer you the chance to exercise, run errands, save money and feel great?

Talk about cheap transportation. As with any hobby, you can spend as much on bike stuff as your budget will handle. Truth is, a couple hundred bucks (or less) can get you a pretty reliable set of wheels.

Even more, did I mention that cycling is good for the environment? Think of those one-and two-mile trips we all take. That's a lot of fuel burned and a bunch of pollutants expelled just for a few minutes of convenience. Make it a point to trade your auto for a bike as often as possible and you'll put extra money back in your wallet and keep loads of toxic garbage out of the atmosphere.

But in case of Dhaka, it's little optimistic to be a bike lover (as everybody says) and a bit of adventurous too. Though bike can be one of the most effective and efficient means of transport which will reach you on time with a minimal cost and maximum physical outcomes. So why not?

For this issue we have got D. Shahidul Alam in the cover despite his crazy business he could spare some time from his daily life. Shahidul is mostly known for photography still his bike activism yet to cherish by many. More over a contributing text from Jay Walljasper certainly added some extra value on Trino. Jay is a very well-known and acclaimed writer for National Geographic Traveller.

A true story on Bongshal will lead our readers to rethink about bicycle not only as a mode of leisure or hobby but also for business.

Country's longest and vibrant bike ride "Clemon Ride for Green" just took part. Kewkradong Bangladesh worked as joint coordinator with another Brit team.

Biking in Bangladesh is not an uncommon sight. More than 500000 units of bicycle sell every year. So it's not optimisms to think bicycle as a means of transport someday in Bangladesh. Let's hope for the best and ride safe

Shanti

Muntasir Mamun Imran
Editor-in-Chief



~ Experience ~ Bangladesh^{II}

A Photographic Travelogue

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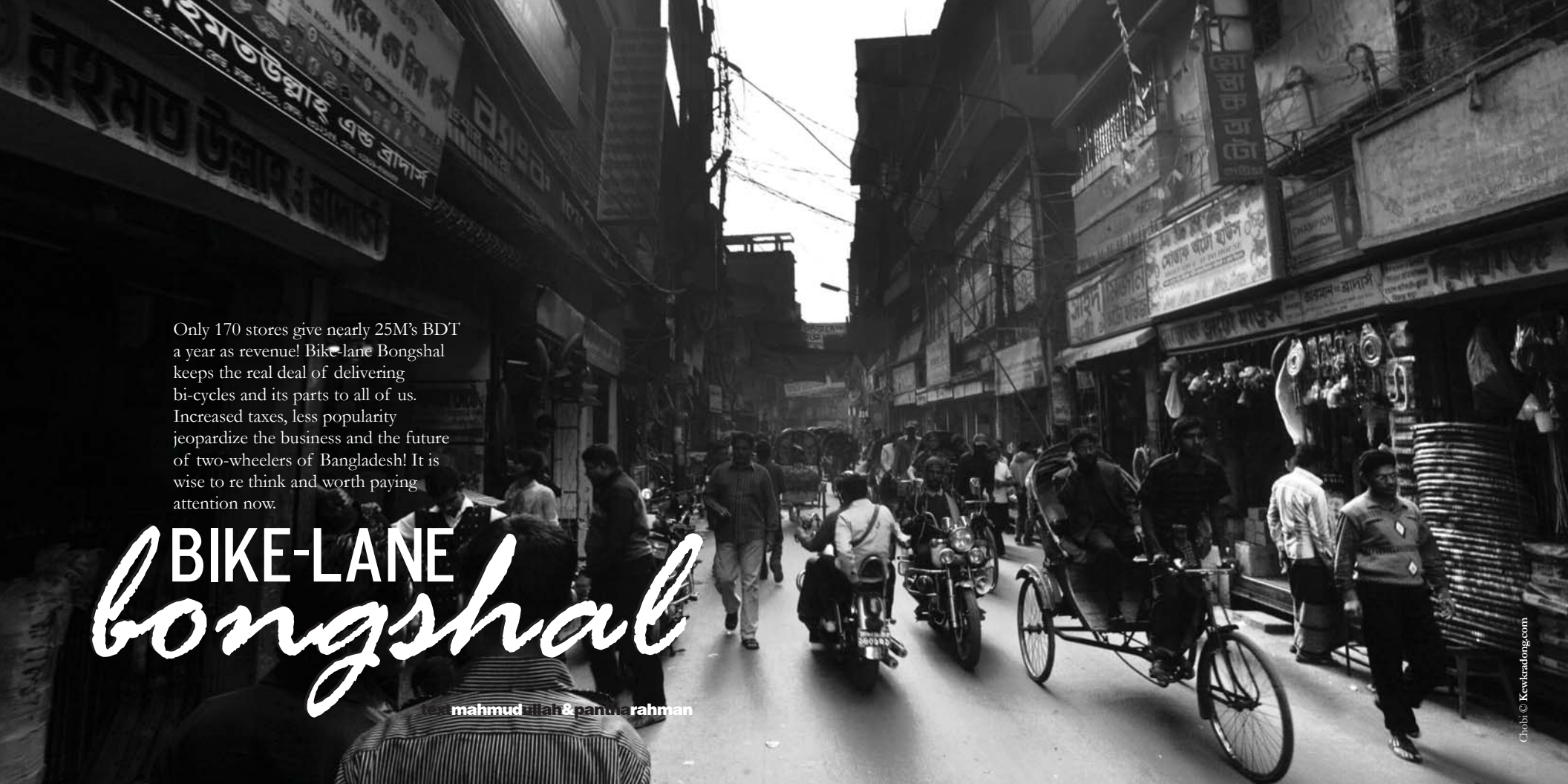
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TRINO/GO/ JAN/2011

going is good



Only 170 stores give nearly 25M's BDT
a year as revenue! Bike-lane Bongshal
keeps the real deal of delivering
bi-cycles and its parts to all of us.
Increased taxes, less popularity
jeopardize the business and the future
of two-wheelers of Bangladesh! It is
wise to re think and worth paying
attention now.

BIKE-LANE *Bongshal*

mahmudullah & pandu arahman



Bongshal is situated next to Nazira Bazar of Old Dhaka. There lies the biggest cycle market of the country. Cycle market was originated at 1965 at the hands of non Bengalis of Nawabpur and Chittagong, but it started to bloom after 1971 and moved towards Bongshal. Peoples and retailers from distant places of the country buys cycle and cycle parts from here at wholesale rate and sell them to the final customers or users. Here cycle is available for almost every age levels. Bongshal proudly markets almost 0.5 million cycles every year with its 170 individual stores.

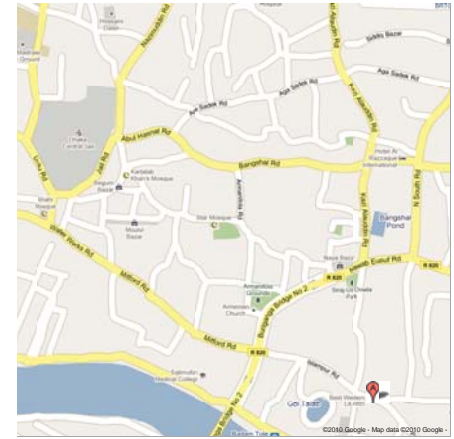
Bongshal
proudly markets
almost 0.5
million cycles
every year with
its 170
individual stores.





Bangladesh government earns almost 25 million taka every year from the revenue collected from the cycle vendors. And this acts as the main barrier for promoting the use of cycles. According to the statement of Md. Nurul Haque, general secretary of the Bangladesh cycle merchandise, assembly and importers association, Bangladesh is an idle place for cycling. It makes sense geographically and economically. He assumes that if cycle usage is promoted traffic jam problem of Dhaka city will reduce and it will be a life worthy place again. But he also stated that the government of Bangladesh has set 89% tax on import of cycle where as India and Srilanka has set only 15-20% tax on cycle. The harsh policy of government is the main barrier for cycling in Bangladesh. He said government should be more liberal with his revenue policies.

He also opened a cycle assembly training center where proper guidance and training is provided to create skillful cycle mechanic. He said cycling can increase employment. A good cycle mechanic can assemble 8 cycles per day and earns about 120 Tk per cycle. So if we sum up he can make 960 Tk per day and 28,800 Tk per month which is the salary of a primary level employee of a multi national company.



Cycle not only enables employment for mechanics, but also for newspaper hawkers and delivery men. Many people earn living by delivering milk and other stuff by cycle.

Observing the traffic jam many people are now using cycle as transportation for office or school going. There are places of Bangladesh where cycle is the only medium of transportation.

The cycle owner's society of Bongshal is trying their best to promote cycle as mean of transportation by arranging cycle rally and several publications. But due to the heavy import tax levied on cycle they are making slow progress.



Another problem is we are rich on tires but other parts are difficult to make at Bongshal. So creating a cycle factory is not even on the blueprints of Bongshal.

Now Indian and Chinese cycles are very popular among the users. Indian cycles offer better quality so it is also a little bit expensive than the Chinese ones. Among the Indian bikes Hero, Atlas, Avon are well circulated at cities and they cost around 5000 Tk. Chinese bike like MTV and Fito can be found between 4000-5000 Tk. There are also cheap bikes but they do not offer good quality. Kid's bikes of variety colors and names like "Spiderman", "Batman" is also stored at Bongshal and they can cost between 3000-4000 Tk.



Chobi © Pamthia Rahman

Md. Nurul Haque, general secretary of the Bangladesh cycle merchandise.



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Life

ACTION
unity
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ATTITUDE IS INSPIRE

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HOPE
Knowledge is power
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As an avid mountain biker, albeit not a great one, I was interested in the possibilities of being able to ride during my time spent in Bangladesh. Should I ship a bike before I go? Will I be able to find a bike to ride once there? Is it safe to ride a bike? To this last question, most often I received an emphatic, “NO!, it is not safe to ride anywhere in Dhaka, you might die!” So, off I went sans bike and crushed hopes of being able to ride for the next 8-9 months.

Upon arriving to Dhaka and witnessing the chaotic traffic of the city, I also believed that maybe bike riding here wasn't such a good idea. The roads are packed with traffic almost all the hours of

textmelissgackstetter

the day and everyone is looking to get that extra inch on the other guy. For my first couple of weeks in country, I would cringe and wince and find it better to close my eyes every time I got into a moving vehicle rather than watch the game of chicken being played with all the drivers. Then, being the active person that I am,

I found a group of runners who braved the traffic every Saturday afternoon; they are called the BD Hash Harriers and have no fear. I learned that weaving in and out of traffic on foot wasn't all that difficult and was an excellent way to be able to see different parts of the city, both jam packed, wall-to-wall buildings and more rural, farm land type areas.

Thru this group of runners I found someone with an extra bike and a contact of someone to tag along with on Friday morning rides so that I wouldn't get lost. I must have had the biggest smile on my face that day, riding away from my friend's house. He equipped me with a nice mountain bike, helmet and chain with lock. My first introductory ride was short; from Gulshan to Baridarha which only took about ten minutes by bike. There were no mishaps or even close calls, I stayed to the side of the road nearest the sidewalk, went with the flow of traffic and passed by rickshaws and other cars stuck in traffic jam where I could. By car, that ride probably would have taken about twice the amount of time it took me to go by bike. I immediately got in touch with the Friday rider, met him that Friday and went out for a four hour bike ride. We met at the American Club in Gulshan, road out to Bashundara, crossed the river and made it into the more rural parts of Dhaka.

The ride was intense, Bangladesh has a great terrain for mountain biking and the rider I was with was definitely no beginner. I slip and slid my way through the muddy spots and fell down a couple times. The locals would stop and stare and the couple of times we stopped for a water break or to fix a tire we would draw a small crowd. Some were concerned with the scratches I had picked up from my spill to the ground and for the most part they just wanted to see what was going on. After about four hours it was time to return to the hustle and bustle of Dhaka. The traffic had picked up considerably, but still easy enough to get thru; crossing airport road, probably one of the busiest roads in Dhaka, was my main concern. As soon as I saw a gap, I closed my eyes, held my breath and peddled as fast as I could to the other side. Made it, no worries.

Sadly, I haven't been back out for a ride since that day. I blame this partially on being super busy at work and partially on the fact that both tires went flat after that day. I have been able to fix one tire, but the other is just not cooperating. Once I get the other pesky tire patched up, I plan to be back out on a second ride very soon. I'm glad my worries of never being able to bike turned out to be untrue!)



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Ride For Green

textnaomidixon

Dhaka grabs you by the arm like a pushy father and forces you to look, look at all the people's faces, feel the chaos and confront the odour. People on trucks, in coaches, in buses, in vans, in cars, on rickshaws, on bikes, on foot. Once Dhaka has finished with you it spits you out with a force and a breath of relieving fresh air. Bangladesh is so green.

Dhaka – Sylhet (Green Line bus)

Hold onto your seats, the Green Line Bus is the head honcho on the roads of Bangladesh. The UK team gets to know the Muntasir Mamun's Kewkradong team as we bounce along the road catching a nap and some surroundings from Dhaka to Sylhet.

Sylhet – Moulvi Bazar – 46 miles

All the crew are excited about getting our teeth into this ride. We head for a media press conference chaired by the Mayor of Sylhet to kick off the trip, with the usual media in tow. After numerous puncture repairs to my bike and Jay's, a token reminder of the debris in Dhaka, we finally set off. The first day is fantastic, so many of us are on an adrenaline high. We whip through the country side through miles of acid green paddy fields and beautiful wetlands, with silhouettes of locals fishing. We negotiate the roads with our fellow Kewkradong gang aka 'the Dhaka boys' and there is a positive buzz in the air.

When we arrive in Moulvibazar we are penned in at a roundabout in the centre of town and there is an ever growing group of spectators. Jebi recognises family members in the crowd and it's a great feeling to be in the Rahman's home town. The UK gang are totally over indulged at Jebi, Jelina and Zillur's parents with mountains of mouth watering Bangla fish and meat dishes and discussions of the next leg of the trip 72 miles to Brahmanbaria.

Moulvi Bazar – Brahmanbaria – 77 miles

This started out as a cracking day, gliding through the rolling hills of the Finlay Tea Estate and stopping for a brew at a shady tea shack. The tea estates, a legacy of the Raj, are beautiful, deep green in colour and provide landscape of orderly rows of tea shrubs. Sylhet is also known as 'Little Darjeeling' and I could see why. As the day grew on our group was thinning out and people were finding their own pace. The day was growing extremely hot with temperatures rising over 30°C degrees. We stop at Habiganj for some baji, rice and paratha, fuel up and we are all eager to get on with the rest of the day's riding. Spirits are high and the UK and Kewkradong team are becoming friends.





The day was growing dark and again we were split up as a group, tiredness was slowing us down, but somehow we all found a determination and steady pace and ploughed on. The scenery was rolling out to the immense wetlands; it was so peaceful out on the open road.

At one point a local with his young boy accidentally spilled their catch of the day onto the road. I will never forget picking my way through hundreds of nipping live crabs in the haze of Bangladeshi dusk scented with incense.

A motorcyclist told me and a fellow cyclist Jay that we only had 10 km left to go. I was delighted, it was getting dark we were tired and thirsty. We took a break at a small town called Sarail, drank coconut milk and chatted to some locals.

Darkness was closing in, Jebi arrived at Sarail shortly after us, I was so delighted to see her and we were all fired up to finish the day together on our bikes. The 10 km turned into more like 20 km. We were cycling through deep potholes and traffic in the pitch black. It was not funny or clever. Elated we arrived in Brahmanbaria about 40 minutes behind the rest of the crew. We were all filthy, tired and well and truly a cycling family. The beauty of a day like this was walking up to someone and embracing them as a friend, when a few days before they had been a stranger.

Brahmanbaria – Comilla – 52 miles

I awoke after a restless night of stomach cramps and a few intimate moments hugging the toilet. Our accommodation was pretty nasty and there was a running joke that even the cockroaches didn't even want to hang around this hotel. I cycled with much glee away from Brahmanbaria. The road out of Brahmanbaria was awful and Phil Buckley was not happy on his carbon frame tri road bike. The mountain bikers bounced along the road blissfully unaware. We broke away from the villages and started to enjoy the open space once more. Water Lily, the Bangladeshi national flower, fills the wetlands and miles and miles of rice paddy fields. It was good to be on the move.

We take a break near a Tailor's shop and while he is plugging away at his pedal powered machine producing a magnificent salwar kameez we completely take over his tiny shack. Omari sits down and the piece of wood under him creaks, the Tailor shakes his head and offers him a chair. Later he proudly poses for a photo and we leave him a tip for our total invasion. I realise that on our bikes we connect with the locals, disarming and cultivating curiosity. We arrive in Comilla and are delighted to find clean rooms and amazing views over the countryside. I pass out.

Comilla – Feni – 32 miles

We get up early eager to see the Mainamati ruins, but due to bureaucratic barriers and heavy traffic we are defeated. Instead Jebi, Anjub, Zillur, Jelina, Mathew and I pop into one of the numerous BRAC centres outside Comilla this one was for horticulture and we see the positive signs of a female work force.

We get back on our bikes and I discover that when in Bangladesh its not 'deli belly' it is the 'chitta shittas' you suffer from. It was thoroughly unpleasant and I became very fond of my friends Imodium and Dr Hussain. I also have my first collision with one of the Dhaka boys and get a bit of a fright, but we all jump up and everyone is fine, just some bruised hands and egos.

We arrive in Feni after a short day cycling and Jebi and I are welcomed by a technicolor guest room. We eat some peanut butter sandwiches, watch some Bollywood classics on the TV, and catch up on some sleep.

Feni – Chittagong – 63 miles

The cycle from Feni is abruptly stopped by the stretching and squeaking sound of a falling tree and the ultimate crash to the ground. There are no signs, just a few shouts of warning and a man with an axe. We lift our bikes over the fallen tree and set off at a good pace.



Chobi © Kewkradong.com



Chobi © Kewkradong.com

We arrive at the Chittagong Guest House with knowledge that there is a swimming pool and all jump into the pool with our full cycling gear on. We giggle and float around in the lovely warm water. We notice a sign which reads 'do not use the swimming pool as a bath to clean yourself'.

Chittagong – Keranihat - Chakaria – 67 miles

I am very reluctant to leave the comfort of Chittagong, the city is buzzing and seems a great place to explore.

However it turns out to be an amazing day for cycling and we clock up decent mileage and keep a steady pace through the blistering heat of the sun. I cycle with Jahangir for the remaining part of the day and we take in the fisheries, rural villages and the stunning blue skies. We stop for breaks at tea shacks along the way, Aminur's favourite, past time. As always all the people we meet along the journey are welcoming and generous and we are welcomed into stranger's homes.

That evening we stay in ICDDR,B (International Centre for Diarrhoeal Disease Research, Bangladesh) accommodation. We come together in the evening and a local chef creates some fantastic fish, chicken, vegetable bajji, paratha and desserts. I am taught to eat with my right hand. It is a very amusing evening of silly games, stretching, massage, music and chilling out on the eve of our final cycle day.



Chakaria– Cox’s Bazar – 40 miles

It’s our last day! We have done the big mileage and it is a short ride to Cox’s Bazar. We are all counting down the km signs all the way and I am cycling with Jebi and Anjub, singing most of the journey, in high spirits at the prospect of the seeing the sea and completing the ride. Together we ride past vast national parks and the roads are smooth and quiet, we feel like children out on our bikes to play.

Our arrival at the beach in Cox’s Bazar is a convoluted journey round the town centre, when we make it to the beach we role our bikes to the water and either dive in or get thrown in. Delighted.

Sylhet - Dhaka

When leaving Bangladesh from Sylhet to Dhaka a white headed eagle swooped over our vehicle, it made its presence known. I think it had been keeping an eye over us on our journey.



Chobi © Kewkradong.com

Feasts at Streets of Old Dhaka

Editor's Choice



It may look like a circular coil but when you start biting you will not be able to quit is flavorsome taste. You don't have to be a sweet fan to feel the mouthwatering taste; just one try is enough to get you started for taking more and more. But it is advised to use a tissue or paper napkin while eating to avoid the sweet juice drops of Jilapi.

This food was originated at Iran and came to Dhaka via the Moguls. Previously it was made with sugar but now a days it is being made with brown sugar. Flower, sugar and rose water are needed to prepare jilapi. At first you have to mix all the items properly and then keep the mixture in a piece of cloth. Then you have to make a tiny little hole at the bottom of the cloth. Now you will need a big pan full of oil to prepare jilapi. When you hold the mixture on top of the cooking pan and gently rub or squeeze the cloth, the jilapi mixture will fall on the pan. You can make many designs by moving your hands randomly. It can be of different size and colors. The biggest jilapi's are called "Shahi Jilapi". The naming of this food is unknown to us but it is found at the Chalk Bazar of Old Dhaka all over the year.

Dhaka has an enormous variety of food catering to all budgets. Old Dhaka is overflowing with cheap Bangladeshi food where a meal can be had from Tk 50 (\$0.70). From kabab to Biryani old Dhaka has lot more to explore if you are a food lover. Many good food stores are just around the bike lane Bongshal. So your trip to old Dhaka either for bike or street food won't disappoint you.

Biryani is perhaps the most popular rice based dish in the world that is available in many forms. Though, this dish is known as a traditional famous Indian cuisine to the world, Biryani from Dhaka means something very special to the food lovers. Traditional Indian Biryani has a number of variants like Hyderabadi Biryani, Afghani Biryani, Sindhi Biryani, Lucknowi Biryani etc. which clearly represents the different preparation for different states of India. But Biryani from Dhaka has mostly two variations, Kachhi Biryani and Chicken Biryani. Kachhi Biryani is cooked with mutton (and rarely with beef) while Chicken Biryani has chicken as its meat ingredient. In the Indian preparation, the long grain Bashmati rice is used for Biryani. But most recipes of Biryani from Dhaka use the Bangladeshi 'Kali-Jira' rice, very fine polao rice which is produced only in the northern districts like Dinajpur.





Chobi © David Banikder

SHAHIDULNEWS.COM

MUSINGS BY SHAHIDUL ALAM
SINCE FEB 1993 - TILL TODAY

Shahidul was/is widely known for photography in and outbound of Bangladesh but he is so hardly available for a talk. My one-on-one conversation took place with a relation of bicycle. During late 2008 I was riding in Mexico and wrote something online about my trip experience. One fine morning I found his email in my box and I surprise to see he is also an avid rider and got little surprise to read someone from that far. I believe its only bike what made him allow to give us some time for this issue. I don't know how many people would know Shahidul rides almost daily in his daily life in Dhaka. This is an unfold truth and inspiration for many. Please read the following text from Prix Pictel

- Editor's note

A photographer, writer, curator and activist, Shahidul Alam obtained a PhD in chemistry at London University before switching to photography. He returned to his hometown Dhaka in 1984, where he photographed the democratic struggle to remove General Ershad.

A former president of the Bangladesh Photographic Society, Alam set up the award winning Drik agency, the Bangladesh Photographic Institute and Pathshala, the South Asian Institute of Photography, considered one of the finest schools of photography in the world. Director of the Chobi Mela festival and chairman of Majority World agency, Alam's work has been exhibited in galleries such as MOMA in New York, the Centre Georges Pompidou in Paris, the Royal Albert Hall in London and The Museum of Contemporary Arts in Tehran.

A guest curator of the National Art Gallery in Malaysia and the Brussels Biennale, Alam's numerous photographic awards include the Mother Jones and the Andrea Frank Awards. He has been a jury member in prestigious international contests, including World Press Photo, which he chaired. An Honorary Fellow of the Bangladesh Photographic Society and the Royal Photographic Society Alam is a visiting professor of Sunderland University in the UK. He recently set up a media academy in Bangladesh.

Shahidul Alam was involved as a curator and an artist for the exhibition "Where Three Dreams Cross" which was shown at the Whitechapel Gallery in London, 21 January - 11 April 2010. His show "Crossfire" on extra judicial killings in Bangladesh was closed down by the government.

www.shahidulnews.com



FILM REVIEW

BREAK ING AWAY

textnazamshahpar

Breaking Away
Directed by: Peter Yates
Written by: Steve Tesich
Starring: Dennis Christopher, Dennis Quaid, Daniel Stern, Jackie Earle Haley
Release date: July 13, 1979
Running time: 100 min
Language: English
Rated: PG

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"BEST AMERICAN MOVIE
OF THE YEAR SO FAR"

Martin Kneiman



BREAK ING AWAY

20th Century-Fox Presents A PETER YATES FILM "BREAKING AWAY"
DENNIS CHRISTOPHER DENNIS QUAID DANIEL STERN
and JACKIE EARLE HALEY also starring BARBARA BARRIE
PAUL DOOLEY introducing ROBYN DOUGLASS

Produced and Directed by PETER YATES Written by STEVE TESICH
Music Adapted by PATRICK WILLIAMS
Conducted by LIONEL NEWMAN COLOR BY DeLUXE READ THE WARNER BOOK



© 1979 TWENTIETH CENTURY FOX

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When it comes to movies related to Bicycle adventures, very few are actually able to stand out from the rest. It's the movies like *Breaking Away* that can truly fulfill the expectations of the bicycle enthusiasts and at the same time can provide pure entertainment for a whole family of general audience.

Academy Award winner in 1979 for best original screenplay and nominated for four other awards including Best Picture, *Breaking Away* is a truly inspiring and a feel-good movie with a touch of humor every now and then. Suitable for all ages, this classic film also won the 1979 Golden Globe Award for Best Film.

Breaking Away is also ranked eighth on the List of America's 100 Most Inspiring Movies compiled by the American Film Institute (AFI) in 2006 and in 2008 AFI acknowledged it as the eighth best film in the sports genre as well.

The story circles around four closely knit best friends Dave (Dennis Christopher), Mike (Dennis Quaid), Cyril (Daniel Stern) and Moocher (Jackie Earle Haley) living in the college town of Bloomington, Indiana (USA). Having recently graduated from high school, these four free spirits are at the crossroads of their lives trying to figure out what they want from life. The exuberance and the care-free outlook of their youth are perfectly depicted through their conversations and activities while spending time together at the limestone quarry.

The rebellious “cutters”, a derogatory term used by the locals to describe the industrial stonecutters who worked the Indiana Limestone quarries of southern Indiana, constantly despise the college students and their lifestyle. Every so often they try to intimidate the college students which in most cases end up in brawls. They themselves are also pretty much reluctant to go study in college reflecting perhaps their fear and inhibition due to their apparent sense of inferiority.

A passionate bicycle enthusiast, Dave spends most of his time circling around the town on his racing bicycle. His obsession with bicycles is portrayed throughout his lifestyle and despite the constant backing he gets from his mother his activities never cease to irritate his father who's absolutely certain that his son is a good-for-nothing. The poster clad walls and the numerous trophies in his room speak for his immense interest in bicycle racing and pretty soon he becomes overwhelmed by the prospect of getting to meet and compete with a famous professional Italian bicycling team coming to town for the “Cinzano 100” bicycle race. But the race brings tragic end to his enthusiasm when the Italians eliminate Dave from the race by illegal means. Injured and emotionally devastated, Dave swears never to indulge himself in to his naive dreams anymore.

Dave's attempt at romance by serenading a university student Kathy (Robyn Douglass) results in a serious brawl at a bar with her boyfriend Rob (Hart Bochner) and some of his friends. As a consequence, the university authority decides for the first time to bring in an outsider cycling team of ‘cutters’ to battle it out and sort the rivalry on the annual Indiana University Little 500 race.

Clinging to their last drop of hope to prove a point and regain their self-esteem, the four friends decide to form the cycling team for the Little 500 race. Wearing t-shirts with “cutters” printed on it, the team lead by Dave begins an almost impossible to win race starting off from the very last position. Amazingly enough, with utter determination and endurance, Dave single handedly rides through the rest of the competitors to move up to the first place without taking any break for 25 laps. But pretty soon getting injured he has to take a break while the rest of the team stands up for him. Intense drama & suspense grows towards the end as Dave's team-mates get exhausted one after the other and pretty soon they lose the lead on the race. Finally Dave steps up again to make the last push and deliver an extraordinary finale to the race.

Albeit with a predictable ending, this immensely popular bicycle movie is a coming-of-age tale of true determination and endeavor; of family, friendship & love; of inhibition and breaking free from it. Top-notch direction and cinematography coupled with a delightfully amusing screenplay puts *Breaking Away* among the most highly recommended classic movies of all time for the true bicycle adventure enthusiasts and the general audience alike.

More Recommended Bicycle Movies:

The Bicycle Thief (Ladri di Biciclette) (1948)
Beijing Bicycle (Shiqi sui de dan che) (2001)
American Flyer (1985)
Pee Wee's Big Adventure (1985)
Rad (1986)
Quicksilver (1986)
BMX Bandits (1983)
The Bike Squad (2002)
Buffalo Dreams (2005)



June 2008, a group of youth set off for an advocacy world tour on bicycle to aware likeminded people about HIV/AIDS. Group of three started their journey from Thailand. This was no other commuting or touring but finding the local organizations and delivering the advocacy materials were prime objectives of the team.

Let's be together, let's stop AIDS, believing this motto, the team delivered the message to cities to cities on different continents. This initiative directly brought the benefit to the Millennium Development Goal/MDG.

Trino will represent a photo story in its every issue as part a part of the team's conjugation with adventure and advocacy.

HIV/AIDS Advocacy World Tour on Bicycle



**Together
we are**

Cholula, Mexico

Chobi © Muntasir Mamun Imran/kewkradong.com



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HOW TO MAKE BIKING MAINSTREAM

Lessons from the Dutch
text by walljasper

What will it take to transform biking from a recreational pastime to an integral part of our transportation system?

Last spring, public officials from Madison, Wisconsin, returned home from a tour of the Netherlands, and within three weeks were implementing what they learned there about promoting bicycling on the streets of their own city. This month, I joined a similar group of latter-day explorers on a quest to discover what American communities can learn from the Dutch about transforming bicycling in the U.S. from a largely recreational pastime to an integral part of our transportation system.

My fellow explorers on this journey included elected officials, traffic engineers, and business leaders from the San Francisco Bay Area, all in search of what Patrick Seidler, vice chairman of the Bikes Belong Foundation, sponsor of this fact-finding mission, called our own “27 percent

(in the Netherlands, 27 percent of all daily trips are made by bicycle, with enormous health, environmental, economic, and community benefits).

The Netherlands resembles the United States in many ways: It is a prosperous, technologically advanced nation where a huge share of the population owns automobiles. The difference is that the Dutch don’t drive every time they leave home. Their 27 percent rate dwarfs not only the measly 1 percent of trips taken by bicycle in the U.S., but also the rates of many, much bike-friendlier nations (12 percent of trips in Germany are by bike; in Denmark, it’s 18 percent).

But a commitment to biking is not uniquely imprinted in the Dutch DNA. It is the result of a conscious push to promote biking, which has resulted in a surge of cycle use since the 1970s.

So what did we learn from their example?

START BIKE EDUCATION EARLY

Our trip started in Utrecht, where our group marveled at the parade of bicyclists whizzing past us all over town. But what really shocked us was a visit to a suburban primary school, where principal Peter Kooy told us that 95 percent of older students—kids in the 10 to 12 age range—bike to school at least some of the time. In the U.S., roughly half that percentage (50 percent of kids) walked or biked to school... back in 1970.

Since then, the rate has dropped to 15 percent, according to the National Center for Safe Routes to School program.

“I came to the Netherlands to have my mind blown about biking,” declared Damon Connolly, vice mayor of San Rafael, Calif. “And that sure happened when I heard that 95 percent of kids bike to school.” A large part of that success can be attributed to what happens in school. Kids learn how to bike safely as part of their education, said Ronald Tamse, a Utrecht city planner who led our group on a two-wheel tour of the city and its suburbs. A municipal program sends special teachers into schools to conduct bike classes, and students go to Trafficgarden,

a miniature city complete with roads, sidewalks, and busy intersections where students hone their pedestrian, biking, and driving skills (in non-motorized pedal cars). At age 11, most kids in town are tested on their cycling skills on a course through the city, winning a certificate of accomplishment that ends up framed on many bedroom walls. “To make safer roads, we focus on the children,” Tamse explained. “It not only helps them bike and walk more safely, but it helps them to become safer drivers who will look out for pedestrians and bicyclists in the future.”

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BIKING.

These kinds of programs would make a huge difference in the United States, where intimidating street conditions mean that.

BIKERS & BIKES NEED TO FEEL SAFE
Next stop was the Hague, where bikes account for 27 percent of all trips around the city of 500,000 people—exactly the average for the Netherlands as a whole. But not content with being merely average, the Hague is spending 10 million euros a year (roughly \$14 million) to improve those statistics.

Hidde van der Bijl, a policy officer for cycling in the Hague’s city government, outlined the strategy for improving bicycle speed and safety:

PHYSICAL SEPARATION FROM MOTORIZED
TRAFFIC ON BUSY STREETS IS THE SINGLE
MOST EFFECTIVE POLICY FOR GETTING
MORE PEOPLE TO BIKE.

The city is working to separate bike paths as much as possible from streets used by cars and trucks, which in some cases means designating certain streets as bike boulevards where two wheelers gain priority over automobiles. Bike boulevards are gaining popularity in the U.S., and are now in use in Portland, Ore., Berkeley, Calif., Minneapolis, and other cities.

These are practical innovations that could make a dramatic difference in nearly every American town: Research on this side of the Atlantic shows that physical separation from motorized traffic on busy streets is the single most effective policy for getting more people to bike. But it's not only the safety of the rider that's important, which is why officials in the Hague are also tackling the problem of bike parking, a significant issue in any large city. Access to safe, convenient bike storage has a big impact on whether people bike, van der Bijl explained. Without it, "the car is parked right out in front of the house on

on the street, while the bike is stuffed away out back in a shed or has to be carried up and down the stairs in their buildings. So people choose the car because it is easier."

"It's an issue for me personally," agreed Ed Reiskin, San Francisco's director of Public Works, "because I always have to carry my bicycle down to the street." People also worry about their bike being stolen off the street at their home or job. That's why creating more secure bike parking in residential neighborhoods, commercial districts, and workplaces is a priority for Hague's transportation planners.

The city is busy building parking facilities in the basements of new office developments and at strategic outdoor locations throughout the center city, many of them staffed by attendants, much like at a parking garage. You can park your bike for a nominal fee, confident that it will still be there when you return. (Groningen, the Netherlands biking capital—where 59 percent of urban trips are made on two

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wheels—debuted the first guarded parking facility in 1982 and now sports more than 30 in a town of 180,000.). Meanwhile in high density residential neighborhoods, the city is installing bike racks or special bike sheds to make life easier for two-wheel commuters, sometimes taking over auto parking spaces to do it. One car parking space can be converted to 10 bike spaces, says van der Bijl.

IT'S NEVER TOO LATE TO BE A BIKE CITY

On our third day in the Netherlands, we biked across the Atlantic—or at least it felt that way. We headed into Rotterdam, a city whose streets seemed almost American. We came face-to-face with familiar road conditions: 4-lane roads, heavy traffic, aggressive drivers. Bob Ravasio, a Marin County realtor and city council member in the town of Corte Madera, Calif., quipped: “Utrecht seems like a fantasy land now. This is what we’re up against at home.”

Though its bicycle infrastructure is much less obvious than in many parts of the Netherlands, Rotterdam heightened our optimism about boosting biking in the U.S. Even with the car-focused streets, 22 percent of trips around town each day are made on bicycles—below average for Dutch cities, but more than double the rate of any major American city. If they could do it here, we thought, so could we.

“Rotterdam could be San Francisco or Oakland with more bikes,” observed Damon Connolly.

Even more encouraging was the news from Tom Boot, a member of the city’s planning department: Rotterdam has been increasing its share of bike traffic by 3 percent annually for the last several years. They’ve achieved this phenomenal growth by expanding and improving the network of bikeways—separating them from car traffic whenever possible and coloring the asphalt bright red everywhere else to clearly mark bike lanes for motorists to see.

“Good things are happening here,” observed Bruno Maier, vice president of Bikes Belong, “and you can really envision it happening back home.”

WE CAN PLAN NOW FOR A CAR-SPARSE FUTURE

The experience of biking through four Dutch cities provided our team of Bay Area transportation leaders with plenty of ideas for making cycling more safe, popular, and pleasurable back home. For instance, Bridget Smith, director of San Francisco’s Livable Streets Program, is excited about using more color on the roadways as an inexpensive but dramatic way of making sure everyone can tell bike lanes from car lanes.

The experience also fueled our imaginations about the future of cities. We saw one glimpse of what’s possible on Java Island, a cluster of neighborhoods constructed over the past 10 years in what was once Amsterdam’s harbor. It’s a scenic waterfront location with strikingly handsome modern architecture in a pleasing variety of styles that is linked to the rest of the city by tram, road, and bike paths. Although brand new, it exudes a charm reminiscent of the city’s famous canal neighborhoods—which, for my money, are some of the most vibrant and downright pleasing urban quarters on Earth.

“Imagine,” said Bruno Maier of Bikes Belong, “if all the bikes we saw in the Netherlands were single-occupancy vehicles. It would not be the same place.”

Like old Amsterdam, Java Island enjoys a picturesque waterfront setting. But it shares another trait with the city’s medieval districts that you would never expect in a newly built housing development: it accommodates bicycles more easily than cars. Motorized traffic is shunted to the side of each cluster of apartment buildings in underground parking garages, while pedestrians and bicyclists have free reign of the green courtyards that link people’s homes.

WE SAW A BOLD NEW VISION OF URBAN LIFE WHERE PEOPLE MATTER MORE THAN MOTOR VEHICLES.

As in the rest of the country, a robust public transit system supplements the biking infrastructure: Millions of Dutch commuters combine bike and train trips, merging the point-to-point convenience of the automobile with the speed of transit.

This result of this visionary planning is more than just lovely Java Island represents a bold new vision of urban life where people matter more than motor vehicles. You feel a liberating sense of ease moving about these new neighborhoods. I’ve never seen kids even really young ones who look so completely comfortable running around their neighborhoods; not even during my own childhood, in the days before autos completely ruled the road. We passed two sets of young girls staging tea parties, one of them taking place on a blanket just inches from the joint biking/walking trail that served as the neighborhood’s main street.

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Pascal van den Noort, a transportation consultant leading our tour through the city, urged the group to “imitate this in California, please.”

Amsterdam city council member Fjodor Molenaar, who met up with us on Java Island, explained that the Dutch call this an “Auto Luw” development, which translates as “car light” or “car sparse.” This planning idea is now the official policy of the city.

BRINGING IT ALL BACK HOME

After five days of biking around Dutch cities, the Bay Area delegation was fired up about the potential of bicycling to improve life in U.S. cities. On our last day, after a lengthy jaunt through Amsterdam-covering medieval and modern neighborhoods, rich and poor ones, all of them full of bikers—we dismounted for one last discussion at an outdoor café overlooking the waterfront. The next day, most of us would be headed back to our homes and jobs and cars in the U.S., where most people would dismiss the idea of bikes making up a quarter of urban traffic as science fiction.

One question the whole group struggled with was how to reconcile our amazing experience of biking in the Netherlands with the auto-choked streets of San Francisco, San Jose, and Marin County. But as Hillie Talens of C.R.O.W. (a transportation organization focusing on infrastructure and public space) reminded us, it took the Dutch 35 years to construct the ambitious bicycle system we were enjoying. In the mid-1970s, biking was at a low point in the country and declining fast. In fact, Amsterdam turned to an American for a plan to rip an expressway through its beautiful central city. But the oil crises of that time convinced the country to instead work to lessen dependence on imported oil.

The Dutch gradually turned things around by embracing a different vision for their cities. While the country’s wealth, population, and levels of car ownership have continued to grow through the decades, the share of trips made by cars has not. We could accomplish something similar in the United States by enacting new plans to make urban cycling safer, easier, and more convenient... and ultimately, mainstream.

Jay Walljasper wrote this article for YES! Magazine, but Trino has written permission to reprint this article. YES! is a national, nonprofit media organization that fuses powerful ideas with practical actions. Jay is a contributing editor of National Geographic Traveler, Senior Fellow at Project for Public Spaces, and co-editor of OnTheCommons.org. Editor of Utne Reader magazine for 15 years, he is the author of The Great Neighborhood Book and (coming this winter) All That We Share: A Field Guide to the Commons.

Dhaka

city of bikes?

text=editorialdesk

In fact, there aren't many options left for Dhaka to restore its speed and mobility as such mega cities have in the world! Once this Asian mega city was named the city of Mosque and now that turned into famed, city of the traffic jam. The city could be at least turned into an environment- friendly city by making bicycles one of the main means of transport.

Enormous numbers of inhabitants, inadequate roads, small vehicles and more over different speed transport have made travel a nightmare to city dwellers. There are much-talked about transportation systems going to be lunched in the capital city of Dhaka. Soon with a hype of mono rail, tube/subway rail or such mega budget-mega structure in this 304km² land area (wikipedia) for 14,648,000 inhabitants (wikipedia). With respect to time and investment of money and duration of installation of infrastructure for any of

those mega projects will make transportation systems more vulnerable and hectic by far with the increase of inhabitants (annual growth rate 4.10%, highest after Karachi among the 25 largest mega cities of the world).

Meanwhile an interim solution can resolve the problem of intra city transportation for regular commuters by implementing an effective-strict policy on bicycling as an alternative transport in Dhaka.

Most amazingly Bangladesh is having a large number of people depending on pedal based transport namely rickshaw, but uses of bicycle instead of rickshaw are not very large in the city like Dhaka. (A large number of people in Bangladesh already depend on pedal based transport, namely rickshaw and with improvements in infrastructure and government support and encouragement dependency and use of the bicycle will grow.)

In the same way passenger occupancy for the number of fuel based vehicles is not meeting the necessity, accept in peak hours and on weekends. Due to that, the middle class is getting involved in having its own transport in Dhaka city. As a result, the number of vehicles increases every day without solving the real problem, it is tightening the knot a bit harder.

What if we try with bicycles as an alternative means of transport in Dhaka like some other mega cities in the world?

Mexico city, the world's 4th largest mega city having a population of 23.4 Million (wikipedia) is also topping the chart of the world's largest subway systems at 4th, transferring nearly 1.4 billion riders every year (Sources: Jane's Urban Transport Systems, 2002-2003 edition, and individual subway websites. Along with the affordable (20 pesos/ride) subway, the city is well connected with city bus services, taxis, private vehicles and other small human haulers. Still, thin air, thick smog and bad drivers give Mexico City a bad reputation for cyclists. But a new fleet of 1,200 smart red "Ecobici" pay as-you-go rental bikes, at 85 docking stations, marks the most ambitious recent addition to a global trend of municipally endorsed cycling. Since February 2010, 7,000 people have signed up, and between them they have taken more than 200,000 trips (The Economist, July 2010).

This is not something new, but Mexico City had to take this initiative to take control over its road transport, through a low-tech scheme started in the French town of La Rochelle in 1974. Copenhagen launched the first big automated project in 1995. German cities, including Berlin, have tried versions paid for by mobile phone. But the most successful is the "Velib" in Paris, with 20,000 bikes available for users with swipe-cards. In London the transport authority and Barclays Bank will launch a 6,000- bike programmed on July 30th. Users can pay at one of the 400 docking stations, or use a key with a chip.

With on-going urban mobility problems in many municipalities across the globe, due to over-reliance on private motorized transport, local and regional authorities will increasingly turn to the bicycle to help remedy the situation. The number of benefits that come along with the use of bicycles should only promote and encourage the bicycles use. Some lessons can be learned from the European Federation of Transportation and Environment and its encouragement of the use of the bike.

In many European cities, car traffic still enjoys privileges that make it a perfectly sensible idea to use the car even in city centers. But nowadays many other cities like Salzburg and western Austrian city abolished free parking in the central business districts (CBD) only to increase the number of bike commuters.

The decision to use a bicycle largely depends on opinions and attitudes. Changing attitudes towards cycling can bring as big a change in bicycle use as the construction of bicycle facilities. Traffic policy for the bicycle is only successful if it can be sold to the electorate. Both aims – changing attitudes towards cycling and selling good achievements to the electorate – require consequent public relations as part of every program for bicycle promotion.

It is not the aim to build as many bike paths as possible, but to make the bicycle more attractive as a means of transport. If people are asked why they chose a certain means of transport, "saving time" is always mentioned as the most important reason. Safety only comes in second place, and convenience comes third. This means that cycling must be made safer, but also faster (without delays and detours) and more comfortable.

The most important task is not just to increase the speed of cycling, but to avoid unnecessary loss of time, for instance, by detours or if they have a shorter green phase at traffic lights. The biggest obstacles to cycling are the many regulations for motorized traffic which were never meant for cyclists. One-way streets, no left (right) turn permitted or pedestrian zone (in some cases). The ideal target would be to give cyclists back the freedom of movement they enjoyed before all those special regulations for motorized traffic vehicles were introduced.

Using a bicycle path at crossings can be more dangerous than cycling on the roadway. In most cases accidents are caused by conflicts between cars turning and cyclists going straight. Only by making conflicts visible and calculable for car drivers, accidents can be avoided. Besides efforts to reduce accident risk at crossings, the most important measure for the safety of cyclists is speed reduction of motorized traffic.

As mentioned above, cycle ways have very little to do with safety but they have a lot to do with comfort. It makes cyclists feel comfortable to be separated from motorized traffic. Bicycle paths should be wide enough, clearly separated from the pavement and they should have smooth asphalt paving.

Shared pavements for cyclists and pedestrians or 'cycle ways' built on pavement-level or just painted on pavements are an invention of car-orientated traffic planning of recent decades. Cycling on pedestrian pavements is dangerous in any case (legalized or not). Space for cyclists should always be taken from the roadway and not from the pavement.

Both walking and cycling are "Slow" compared with motorized traffic. It is easily forgotten that the average cyclist moves five times as fast as the average pedestrian. Therefore competent traffic engineering for bicycle traffic has very little in common with traffic engineering for pedestrians.

One question often heard, is, is it really possible to ride a bicycle in Dhaka? Answer is why not? Obviously it's not wise riding from Uttara to Motijhel every day, but short distances like within 4 or 5 kilometres distance can be easily covered by a bi-cycle.

Promoting bicycles will also help mitigate the impact of climate change as the bicycle is the one and only transportation system that has zero carbon footprints. Making Dhaka a bicycle friendly city, helps our aims as at putting cycling at the centre of urban planning and political thinking; exchanging knowledge, solutions and strategies and thus promoting political initiatives and practical work on the ground; promoting and supporting a change in policy and practices in cities, will introduce a bicycle friendly perspective in these processes.

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