

Mobile toilets hit Dhaka's streets

DHAKA — Bangladesh has ordered an emergency deployment of 100 mobile toilets in its capital to head off a worrying rise in public defecation, Dhaka's mayor said yesterday.

Mr Sadeque Hossain Khoka said the sprawling metropolis, with an official population of 12 million, has only 48 public toilets — one for every 250,000 residents. This cannot meet demand, he said.

"We have launched 100 mobile toilets, which will be carried around manually on tricycle vans. They will be strategically placed so that people don't have to use road corners to answer the call of nature," he said.

Unofficially, Dhaka's population tops 20 million, when vast slums on the city's outskirts are included.

The tin-sided mobile toilets

are plastered with colourful advertisements including quotes from a famous Bangla poem which tells people: "Let's do good work, no matter where you were born."

They also carry posters urging people not to treat streets and open spaces as public toilets.

The mobile toilets will charge five taka (\$0.10) for people to defecate and two taka to urinate. AFP