

Locals bathe in the river, as there is no alternative water source for them.

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the recommended CETPs will be installed in Narayanganj and other industrial clusters. After installing these CETPs the scenario will be improved", he adds.

At the same time Rahman says that there needs to be greater awareness about this kind of environmental pollution and greater pressure on industries to adopt 'cleaner production technology' as well. "Cleaner production is one of the several innovative approaches to long term reduction in environmental pollution in Bangladesh, and particularly in the Dhaka watershed. 'Cleaner production technology' will decrease production cost as well as reduce the load of pollutants significantly in industrial discharge, which will make common effluent treatment infrastructure feasible to run", he says.

But saving Shitalakkhya River is not possible unless pollution of its tributary Balu River and other canals, is controlled since both domestic and industrial wastes through these water bodies fall into the river. Industrial pollutants from the Tejgaon cluster located at the centre of Dhaka City as well as domestic wastes of the eastern part of Dhaka City are carried to the Balu River through several canals. Most of these canals meet at Trimohini point in Demra. The ongoing pollution in the catchments of Balu River has reached such a level that the river and the canals of the area have become a threat to the people.

"It's really difficult to survive next to Balu River. We haven't been using water from the river for the last 12 years. Moreover, it has become a breeding ground for a huge quantity of mosquitoes during the dry seaon. The stinky river has become a curse for us," said M Jahangir Alam, a local resident of Rajakhali, a village on the bank of Balu Rive at Demra, about a kilometre upstream from the confluence of Balu-Lakhya Rivers.

Professor M Mujibur Rahman, a teacher of Civil Engineering Division of Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology under whose guidance the ongoing Begunbari-Hatirjhil Beautification Project is going on, is highly critical about Dhaka Wasa for not being able to provide a proper sewage system for Dhaka