

Crash diets – that ever popular way to drop some extra pounds fast and a dieting fashion that seems set to remain as shrinking celebrities promote the message that ‘thin is the new black’. But do crash diets really work? Or do they do more harm than good?

Crash diets are low calorie diets, and we lose weight when we consume fewer calories than we burn, no matter how weird or sensible might that diet seem to us. Crash diet fads shock the body, sending it into starvation mode. A crash diet is so restricted that it is nutritionally inadequate.

Very-low-calorie diets that result in rapid weight loss are often dangerously low in essential nutrients, including vitamins and minerals. A lack of vitamins can lead to a host of health problems, including immune system suppression and bad skin, hair and nails.

Long-term crash dieters frequently suffer from osteoporosis; this is because fast crash diets severely limit your intake of calcium. As a result, calcium begins to leach out of the bones in your body, leaving them particularly fragile. Many crash dieters suffer broken bones, particularly hips and wrists, as a result of

Crash diets have a tremendous impact on overall mental and emotional health. Most crash dieters go into depression once they hit the weight loss plateau and start putting on weight. They are known to develop eating disorders like untimely food cravings, anorexia, binge eating and bulimia, which may lead to the development of a number of other disorders.

Whenever we lose weight during crash diet, most of the weight lost is fat but we also lose some lean muscle tissue. Crash diets try to lure us with testimonials and anecdotal success stories. But they lack all important scientific research.

There are many reasons people regain weight after a crash diet. For example, if you lose a lot of weight quickly, it doesn't mean you're necessarily shedding fat. A lot of the lost weight could be water, and that comes back fast once you resume normal eating. Crash diets typically don't emphasise, or even mention, the need for regular physical activity.

Crash dieters find that their weight is constantly fluctuating with each diet that they go on. If you are intent on losing some weight, it is best to avoid crash diets at all costs. Instead, engage in healthy weight loss methods by following these

HEALTH

IT NEVER WORKS!

FAHMIDA HASHEM

PHOTOS: KAZI TAHSIN AGAZ APURBO



Research suggests that rapid weight loss can slow down your metabolism, leading to future weight gain, and deprive your body of essential nutrients. What's more, crash diets can weaken your immune system and increase your risk of dehydration, heart palpitations, and cardiac stress. So when you cut calories, the body 'thinks' it is starving and acts to stop the weight loss. Studies show that when obese people diet, they produce higher levels of the hunger hormone ghrelin and abnormally low level of hunger-suppressing hormones.

their osteoporosis. People who go on an extremely low calorie diet are more likely to develop gallstones than people on a moderately low calorie diet, according to a new study. Crash dieting speeds up the process of aging. Regular signs of aging, such as sagging skin, fine lines, and wrinkles appear early on crash dieters. Crash diets could lead to multiple side effects, problems like haggard look, dark under eyes; dull skin, sloppy posture, zero strength and less stamina are very common among such people.

Crash diet may give a kick start but you must be able to make healthy lifestyle changes to keep losing and/or keep the weight off. If you're overweight, slimming down is critical for your overall health. Even moderate weight loss can lower your risk of developing heart disease, diabetes, and some types of cancer. But it's important to lose weight safely, which usually means slowly. However you lose weight, you're highly likely to put it back on. And the problem is not lack of willpower, but that obesity makes it harder to shed weight.

tips: Speak with your nutritionist before beginning any weight loss plan. She can provide you with tips on how to lose weight safely; set realistic goals and aim to lose no more than 1 to 2 pounds week, eat regular meals, choose a variety of healthy foods from the main food groups, develop your low fat cooking skills and eat plenty of vegetables and fruit. Focus on limiting portion sizes and pair this with regular exercise to find that how your weight drops off!

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ENVIRONMENT

One of Bangladesh's most significant natural resources is the Sundarbans-- the largest mangrove forest of the world comprising of 140,000 hectares of tidal forests. This forest provides 45 percent of Bangladesh's total timber resources and 41 percent of total forest revenue. Additionally, this green lifebelt has been protecting the 160 million people of Bangladesh from countless natural calamities.

When the destructive cyclone Sidr hit Bangladesh in 2007, this forest protected Bangladesh's heartland from the raging wind rushing at 260 miles per hour. As a consequence, the lush green forest was torn apart but it saved Bangladesh's densely populated cities from the tidal surge and raging storm.

Hundreds and thousands of affected people who lost all their belongings in the calamities had to take refuge in the forest. Therefore, besides protecting the country from the frequent natural disasters, the forest provides sustenance for the increasing number of destitute people. Even for their daily meal, these people have to move into the most isolated parts of the forest. Thus, the Sundarbans, the lush green sanctuary is gradually being taken over by human activities. Its bountiful resources and enormous habitat is shrinking fast due to relentless human encroachment.

The most atrocious form of encroachment we have witnessed very recently is the burning and destruction of acres of forest through deliberately set forest fires. Taking advantage of the dry season, miscreants set fire to the forest to clear the habitat and to turn it into their agricultural property. Within one month from March 27 to April 29, at least seven incidents of calculated forest fire destroyed acres of Sundarban's lush greenery. Although officials from the forest department said that the fire might be caused by someone's burnt cigarettes, local people revealed an entirely different story.

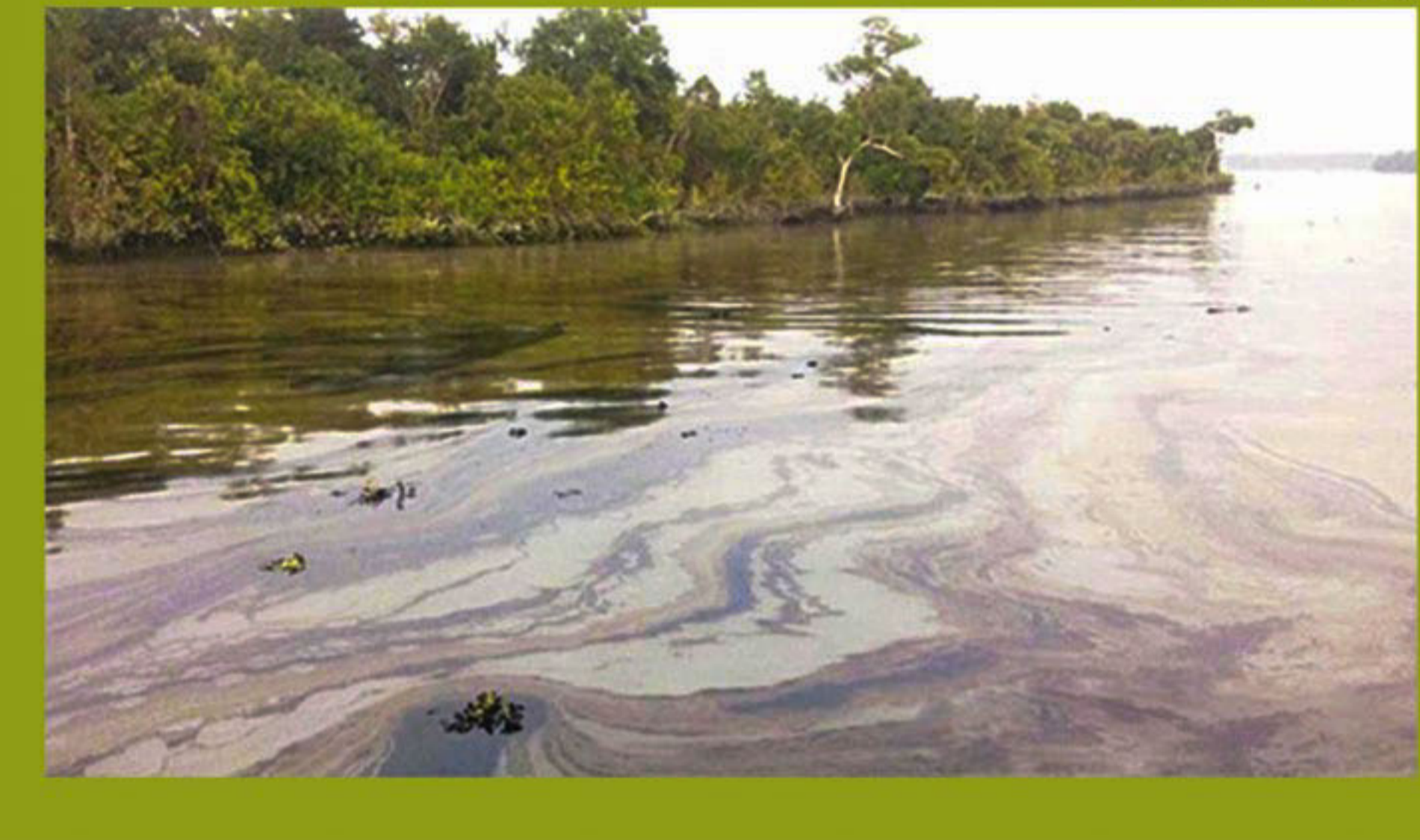
Mukhlussuddin, an NGO worker who has been working at Sharankhola, a place adjacent to the forest, for the rehabilitation of cyclone affected people said, "Some local elites deliberately

DESTROYING OUR LIFELINE

MD SHAHNAWAZ KHAN CHANDAN



PHOTOS: STAR FILE



destroyed the forest to expand their fishing canals. After clearing the forest, they will set nets and huge traps in the shallow rivers to catch fish and mud crabs for industrial purposes."

"Setting fire to the forest has become

frequent in every dry season. If the situation goes on like this, the Sundarbans will be wiped from our map out within a few years," he adds. In fact, seven incidents of forest fires in the Sundarbans within one month are quite

unprecedented where 22 incidents of forest fires occurred in the last 14 years. However, the rate of forest fires has increased recently. Just two years earlier, on May 21, 2014 a massive fire at Sundarbans' Dhansagar station destroyed five acres of forest. In March 2011, fire devastated Sundarbans three times in one month.

A responsible official of the forest department says anonymously, "We are dependent on the local fire service to defuse the forest fire. However, with their inadequate resources it is an impossible task for them to fight with such large scale fire."

"As a result, our workers have to dig fire ditches to save the rest of the forest which is a very traditional way and most of the times were proven unsuccessful. We have been demanding repeatedly for a dedicated fire service unit for us. But we never got one," adds the forest official.

In 2014, an oil tanker sank in one of the rivers of the Sundarbans and hundreds of tons of furnace oil polluted the river channels that flow through the forest. It took a serious toll on the forest's flora and fauna. The government put a ban on using the river channels of the forest by the commercial vessels. But nobody paid any heed to that order. Cargo vessels are still navigating along the rivers in the forest frequently. As a consequence, two cargo vessels laden with coal and chemical fertiliser sank in the river again in 2015. Paying no heed to these disasters, the Bangladesh government is also still continuing its power plant project, placed dangerously adjacent to the forest.

It is evident that the Sundarbans, Bangladesh's lifeline, has become a victim of utter negligence and irrational whims of our leaders. We, Bangladeshis are very interested to tap into all of our resources, but we are not at all concerned about saving this world heritage site which is vital for the very existence of this nation. The seasons of tropical cyclones is approaching fast. Will Bangladeshis be able to find an alternative to Sundarbans to save them from the incoming devastating calamities? The question remains.



PHOTO: INTERNET

7

NUMBERS

The number of top priority fast track mega projects, namely the Padma Bridge, Metro Rail, Rooppur NPP, LNG Terminal, Padma Deep Sea Port, Rampal Coal Power, and Matarbari Coal Power that are underway in Bangladesh. All of the seven government projects, costing \$40 billion have gained pace, although some of them are a few years behind schedule.