



Dholai Khal retention area narrowed down for construction of a box-culvert.

PHOTO: HELEMUL ALAM



Goran Chatbari retention area losing marshy land due to government projects.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

Why Wasa's reservoirs dying

Not just the canals, retention ponds are also an equally vital organ of the city that manage storm water runoff to prevent flooding and downstream erosion, and improve water quality in an adjacent river, stream, lake or bay. Today The Daily Star publishes its fifth report of the series on the city canals, focusing on the retention ponds and how due to unabated encroachment, lack of initiative and unplanned urbanisation these areas are reducing gradually and increasing the city's waterlogging vulnerability.

FIFTH REPORT on DHAKA CANALS

HELEMUL ALAM

Though sufficient areas as water retention pond is necessary for reducing waterlogging and flood management through flood protection embankment, the retention areas of the western part is reducing fast due to a lack of proper initiatives by the government.

During construction of the 36km western embankment, three permanent pump stations, Kallyanpur, Goran Chatbari and Dholai Khal, were set up with retentions ponds, which have reduced over the years due to negligence.

A retention basin is used to manage storm water runoff to prevent flooding and downstream erosion, and improve water quality in an adjacent river, stream, lake or bay.

Moreover, lack of an efficient storm sewer system also contributes to the reduction of water carrying capacity, causing waterlogging, drainage congestion and other hazards throughout the monsoons.

These constraints have to be identified and to reduce the capital's flood vulnerability it is essential to protect

and preserve flood retention ponds, said experts.

Retention pond at Goran Chatbari pump station is comparatively in a better condition though 40 acres of land have been reduced recently due to the construction work of an elevated expressway.

Dholai Khal pump station has also lost its retention area due to the construction of a box culvert in the 90s by Dhaka City Corporation.

According to experts at least 105 acres of regulatory pond areas are necessary for the pumping station at Dholai Khal, which has now only 3.5 acres.

There are three pumps at the station with a 7.4 cumec (cubic metre per second) capacity each.

In Kallyanpur pump station the retention area is under the risk of being encroached if Wasa does not go for its ownership soon as the government has failed to acquire lands

LAND NEEDED FOR RETENTION PONDS

AREAS	REQUIRED (apprx acre)	AVAILABLE (apprx acre)
Dholai Khal	105	3.5
Kallyanpur	514	171
Goran Chatbari	676 (above)	630



Kallyanpur retention area facing encroachment.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

over the last 25 years.

In a study report in 1990, the Japan International Cooperation Agency (Jica) suggested setting up a pumping station with a capacity of 20 cumec in the area, and keeping 514 acres of land for regulating ponds.

But the government has acquired only around 57 acres of land so far. The city's waterlogging situation is worsening due to a rapid growth of unplanned urbanisation at many parts of the reserved areas.

The government on the other hand is continuously reducing its land acquiring targets and now they are

completely out of the land acquisition process.

Two pump stations were set up with the grant of Jica at the station, having capacity of 10 cumec each in 1993 and 2010. Jica's requirement was to create a regulatory pond on 514 acres of land initially and it was reduced to 227 acres later. But the government failed to acquire land showing fund shortage.

It would have been possible to acquire the total land initially using only Tk 50 crore but now it is a matter of big amount of money, said a Wasa official.

Wasa now has 171 acres of land under their control -- 57 acres acquired, 98.35 of Bangladesh Agricultural Development Corporation (BADC), 9.71 of canal land of Wasa and 11.4 khas land.

Wasa is using the BADC land for 3 months (August to October) as a regulatory pond and the rest of the months BADC is using it as their seed beds following a memorandum of understanding (MoU) between them. But these lands are also under threat of encroachment.

The pump station and its regulating pond area are important as water of the areas including a large part of Mirpur, Kallyanpur, Rokeya Sarani, Kazipara, Shewrapara, Agargaon, Sangsad Bhaban area, Mohammadpur, Rayerbazar, Satmasjid Road and BDR area gathers there, which is then pumped out to the Buriganga river, said a Wasa official.

WHY RETENTION AREAS ARE IMPORTANT

- Manage storm water runoff
- Improve water quality in adjacent bodies
- Prevent flooding, downstream erosion
- Bank stability, aesthetic benefits
- Vegetation removes soluble nutrients through uptake

CAUSE OF CRISIS
Failure to acquire lands
Unplanned urbanisation
Land deficits
Encroachment
Lack of initiatives

The waterlogging will worsen if around 227 acres of land are not kept reserved as retention areas, many of which are now under threat of grabbing, he said.

Prof Emeritus of Brac University Ainun Nishat, a water resources and climate change specialist, said the reservoir should be kept according to its plan to get proper benefits.

If the regulating areas are reduced, then it will be necessary to increase the pumping capacity, otherwise the areas around the pond will inundate, he said.

He said many areas from where water comes to the pond through different canals will also be inundated if it is not pumped out properly.

Meanwhile, the Executive Committee of National Economic Council at a meeting on January 19, 2000 approved about Tk 82.66 crore project to acquiring 269.78 acres of land (152.70acre private land, 117.08acre

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Two DU students, 7 kids drown

STAR REPORT

Two Dhaka University students and seven kids drowned in four districts yesterday and on Monday.

Abner Tazuar Nirjhor and Ahmed Hasan of Dhaka University drowned in the Padma river during a trip to Dohar yesterday.

The incident happened around 2:30pm at Mahmudpur point of Moinghat area when the duo along with their 12 other friends went to take baths in the river. Nirjhor, 22, and Hasan, 20, drowned being washed away by the river's strong current, said witnesses.

The deceased were first-year students of Economics. A diver team of fire service recovered the bodies around 5:30pm, said

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People buy daily essentials from a mobile outlet of Trading Corporation of Bangladesh in front of the Jatiya Press Club. The state-run TCB has recently started the sale of essentials to keep their prices in control ahead of the Eid-ul-Azha.

PHOTO: STAR

7.3m under fives stunted

Says Brac-LANSA survey

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Although Bangladesh has achieved a remarkable success in alleviating poverty, it is still facing challenges to elevate the nutrition scenario among children, according to findings of a joint survey conducted by Brac and LANSA yesterday.

Around 7.3 million children under five remain stunted while 6.5 million underweight and 2.9 million physically weak, disclosed the findings at a seminar on "Nexus

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Piles, Fistula, Constipation, Dysentery, Colonoscopy, Polyp, Colon & Rectum Cancer

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WAR CRIMES TRIAL

Tangail man shown arrested in RP Shaha killing case

Ex-Bangalee army man who 'worked for Pakistan' denied bail

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

International Crimes Tribunal-1 yesterday showed a Tangail man arrested in a case over the abduction and killing of philanthropist Ranada Prasad Shaha, known as RP Shaha, and his son Bhabani Prasad Shaha during the 1971 Liberation War.

Mahabubur Rahman, 69, of Boiratiapara village under Mirzaganj upazila, is now in a Tangail jail following arrest on July 29 in a case filed under Special Powers Act-1974, a retired prosecutor Rana Dasgupta in a petition.

If not shown arrested in the killing case and kept in jail, he might go into hiding taking bail in the special powers

tribunal, Rana told the three-member tribunal led by Justice Anwarul Haque. The tribunal directed the jail authorities to produced Mahabubur on November 7.

During a probe beginning April 18, the case's investigation officer found Mahabubur's involvement in two incidents of crimes, including the killing, said Rana.

He told The Daily Star later that Mahabubur worked under the leadership of his father, late Abdur Wadud, chairman of Mirzapur Peace Committee, an anti-liberation organisation.

On May 7, the Pakistani occupation army men, accompanied and supervised by Mahabubur, attacked Kumudini

Complex to kill Ranada, who owned it, but did not find him, said Rana. Raiding another residence of his in Narayanganj around 11:00pm, they abducted Ranada, Bhabani and three other men and they were later killed, he added.

Rana said Pakistani army men, accompanied and supervised by Mahabubur, also attacked Mirzapur Shahapara, a village populated mostly by Hindus, on May 7 and killed 33 Hindu men.

Ranada was born on November 15, 1896 in Mirzapur village near the subdivisional town of Tangail of the erstwhile Mymensingh district.

Reaching the pinnacle of success as

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Joint Secretary Munir made DG of ACC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has appointed Joint Secretary Md Munir Chowdhury, who was much acclaimed for his bold role in preventing corruption, as director general of one of the six divisions of Anti Corruption Commission (ACC).

The division will be decided later after a discussion. A public administration ministry circular on Sunday confirmed the appointment which will

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