

WEATHER FORECAST

YESTERDAY'S TEMPERATURES

DHAKA H 34.5 L 27.2	MYMENSINGH H 33.2 L 26.1	CHITTAGONG H 33.7 L 26.3	SYLHET H 33.5 L 23.9	RAJSHAHI H 34.0 L 26.6	RANGPUR H 34.2 L 26.0	KHULNA H 35.2 L 27.0	BARISAL H 33.0 L 26.6	COX'S BAZAR H 32.0 L 26.0
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Rain accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely to occur at a few places over Rangpur, Rajshahi and Khulna divisions and at one or two places over Dhaka, Mymensingh, Sylhet, Barisal and Chittagong divisions with moderately heavy falls at places over the country till 6:00pm today, reports UNB. Day and night temperatures may remain nearly unchanged over the country, says Met office. The sun sets in the capital today at 6:50pm and rises tomorrow at 5:12am.

Once Dhaka was adorned with several hundred ponds. Like canals, only a handful exist now. But they are also in death throes due to negligence of the authorities concerned. Although, according to the Field, Open Space, Park and Natural Water Body Protection Act 2000, filling up of any water body including pond is illegal, it's going on unabated. The Daily Star found 63 ponds in the maps of undivided Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) in its 28 wards out of 90. A survey for the map was carried out between 2003 and 2011. But many of the water bodies were filled up before the period and also even after the survey. We are publishing the third report of the series today covering the then DCC ward-88, which is now ward-52 of the Dhaka South City Corporation.

PART 3



Not so long ago, there used to be a pond in place of this tin-roofed structure. Now the soothing sound of rippling water has been replaced by cacophony of shops, shoppers and honks. The photo was taken at Lalmia Sarkar Road in the capital's Jurain area recently.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

Only exists on map

PONDS of Dhaka

HELEMUL ALAM

The pond was not just a source of water for the households.

On hot summer days, both children and adults alike used to enjoy the cooling and soothing effect of a cold swim in the water body.

While, the elderly would sit under the shades of trees beside the pond and relax.

The around one-bigha pond was situated beside Lalmia Sarkar Road in the capital's Muradpur of Jurain under ward-88 of the undivided Dhaka City Corporation (now Ward-52 of Dhaka South City Corporation).

Like many other ponds in the capital, its fate was also sealed. As soon as the owner of the pond passed away in 1992, his sons started to fill it up.

Now, a poultry house, tailor, furniture

and medicine shops occupy the pond land.

And, it is impossible to imagine that the six shops at 108/11 Lalmia Sarkar Road used to be a water body used by all even around a decade ago.

The pond was a source of water for the households in the area comprising Muradpur 1 (holding 1-46) and Muradpur 2, 3 and 4 of Jurain -- around 0.536 sq km.

According to locals, it used to be the

LALMIA SARKAR ROAD POND
Privately owned
SIZE: 1 bigha (apprx)
AT PRESENT: Shops

only pond in the area.

The water body was owned by one Abu Member, who also let others use it, they added.

"After the death of my husband, all of his properties were distributed among his successors," said Bulu Begum, 50, his wife. She said her eldest son inherited the pond, who eventually sold it.

"But my youngest son later bought it

back." By that time, the pond was filled up completely, she said.

Bulu Begum said the pond water was clean and locals also used it for drinking.

Mariyam Akhtar, daughter of Abu Member, said, "Filling up of the pond began around 1995. It was done partially. A few years later, it was completely filled up."

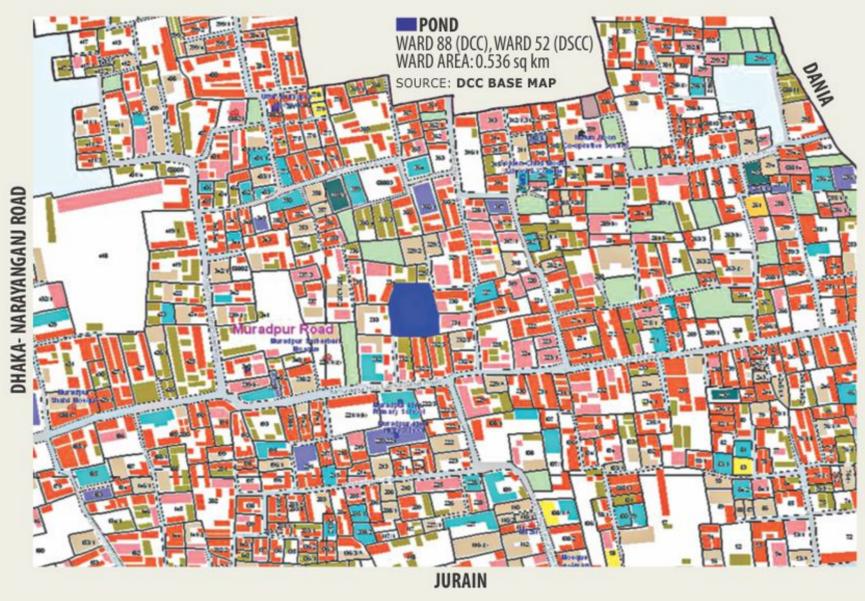
Mariyam said she heard from her mother that the pond was there since the British period. "She said it was the only pond in the area, which was useable."

As the water was clean, people would come from far to use it, she said. "But after my father's death, my brothers set up boundary walls around the water body. Since then, only family members had access to it."

Harunur Rashid, a resident of the area, said, "My friends and I used to take baths in the pond even before 1992. But the family put up boundary walls afterwards, and eventually filled it up."

However, according to the base map of Dhaka City Corporation, whose survey was carried out in 2006, there is still a pond in the area.

(Edited by Hasan Meer)



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