

Living in toxic air

Global survey says Bangladesh has most polluted air; Dhaka 2nd most polluted capital city

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA

Bangladesh has the most polluted air in the world and Dhaka is the second most polluted capital city, according to a new study.

"At a country level, weighted by population, Bangladesh emerges as the most polluted country," said the 2018 World Air Quality Report released yesterday. Greenpeace and AirVisual, who monitor global air quality, prepared the report based on last year's data collected from public monitoring sources.

Gurgaon, a suburb of the Indian capital New Delhi, is the world's most polluted city, says the report, which ranks Dhaka 17th in that category.

According to the report, air pollution will cause around 7 million premature deaths globally next year and have a major economic impact.

Bangladesh, one of the most densely-populated countries in the world, has been struggling with air pollution for long. Dhaka, the country's capital, often finds its place among the most polluted cities in global indices.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 2



Bulldozers tear down illegal structures on the Buriganga during an eviction drive by the BIWTA near the Basila Bridge in the city's Mohammadpur yesterday. The authorities have been conducting the drive to save the river from encroachment. Story on page 2

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON



Not a supporter of art made for propaganda
Arundhati Roy tells Dhaka audience

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

When Arundhati Roy finally entered the halls at Midas Centre yesterday evening, cheers erupted amidst the waiting audience, accompanied by sighs of relief -- "so, it's finally happening!" one said to the other.

But it was not without a lot of drama.

Originally, the event was to be held at the Krishibid Institute in Farmgate. But the Dhaka Metropolitan Police, in a sudden announcement, cancelled the permission due to "unavoidable circumstances" triggering outrage.

Even after the change of venue to Midas Centre, much was done by the government to stop the discussion, organisers said.

Despite the uncertainty, artists, writers, journalists, students and citizens alike crowded the centre to hear the author of "The God of Small Things" and "The Ministry of Utmost Happiness".

Hundreds of Arundhati fans registered for the Chhobi Mela

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4



- Delhi most polluted capital city; 22 of top 30 polluted cities are in India
- UN rapporteur terms air pollution silent, prolific killer
- Brick kilns, vehicles emitting sulphur main cause of pollution
- Every hour, 800 people die suffering diseases caused by polluted air

A never-ending probe

No charge sheet filed even after six years of the murder of Narayanganj teenage boy Taqi

SANAD SAHA and SHARIFUL ISLAM

"Investigation is going on." This is what officials say every year when journalists contact them for comments on the anniversary of Taqi murder. And six years have passed this way.

A draft of the investigation report was leaked before the first death anniversary of Narayanganj teenage boy Tanwir Muhammad Taqi on March 6, 2014.

Different newspapers ran stories based

on the draft with quotes from top-ranking Rab officials about involvement of 11 people in the murder.

Col Ziaul Ahsan, the then additional director general of Rab, told the media at the time that they found evidence of Ajmeri Osman and his 10 associates in the brutal murder.

He also said the charge sheet would be submitted any day.

That day never came.



Tanwir Muhammad Taqi

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1



A worker is busy decorating a road island with raw jute and cutouts of farmers in the city's Khamarbari area yesterday ahead of the National Jute Day today.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

BJMC fund crunch cuts jute purchase

Jute goods production slashed by 66pc

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA

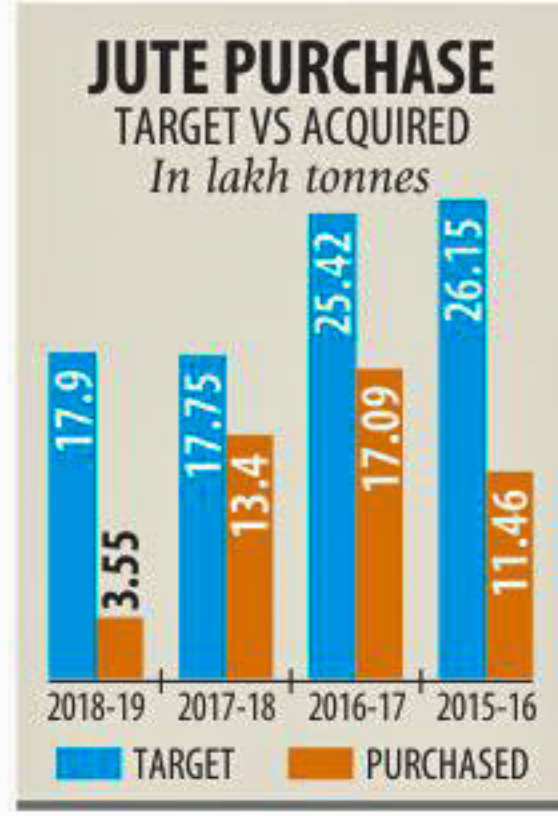
Due to cash crunch, Bangladesh Jute Mills Corporation (BJMC) has been failing to buy raw jute from growers at the peak harvest season and it has resulted in jute mills cutting production by around 66 percent.

The delay in fund allocation for the state-run corporation is causing productivity losses in the 23 jute mills BJMC operates.

The industry that was once the economy's lifeline in 1960-70 lost its glory due to lacklustre policy under the Ministry of Textiles and Jute.

Although the government has repeatedly said that it is trying to restore the lost glory of the golden fibre, but trends

SEE PAGE 11 COL 2



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