

GLOBAL WASTE CRISIS

US top waste producer

Says study, points to challenges as countries move to ban imports of discarded goods

AGENCIES

A new study has identified the United States -- the nation where the idea of mass production was born -- as the world's top producer of waste while also being the worst among industrialised nations at managing it.

The US generates 12 percent of global municipal waste -- three times the global average -- but only accounts for 4 percent of the world's population, reads the report, which was produced by Verisk Maplecroft, a United Kingdom-based research firm and consultancy specialising in global risk data and country risk analysis.

In comparison, China and India make up more than 36 percent of the world's population and generate 27 percent of that waste.

The figures emerge as the world faces an escalating waste crisis driven largely by plastics piling up in developing countries and the oceans. The US is at a crossroads as China and other developing countries refuse to continue to accept its waste, the report authors say.

The research indicates that at 773kg per head, American citizens produce over three times as much waste as their Chinese counterparts, while municipal waste generation per capita is four times higher in the United States than in India.

But the US is not the only country that is bad at managing waste. While better than America at recycling, other industrialised countries, including the United Kingdom, Canada, Germany, the Netherlands and Australia, are also disproportionately responsible for waste generation, the study shows.

Asia, often made the scapegoat for the world's plastic crisis, has undoubtedly contributed to marine plastic pollution, but such criticism has neglected the fact that Asian nations have traditionally served as the world's trash dumps, with

industrialised countries shipping their waste to the region for recycling to prevent their homelands from getting swamped by the goods they discard, reported Eco-Business online.

Plastic waste flows have been directed at developing nations that tend to lack the resources to recycle adequately. What's worse, such deliveries have often contained a mixture of various waste types, which make adequate recycling difficult if not impossible.

But, the study shows, this era is coming to an end. As waste importing countries, including Thailand, Vietnam and Malaysia, are moving to limit the material they accept or ban it outright following China's foreign waste ban 18 months ago, industrialised nations must find ways to reduce the rate at which they devour resources and deal with their own plastic waste rather than dumping it in the developing world.

Will Nichols, research firm's head of environment, said the US had better recycling abilities than much of the world, "but the sheer amount of waste that is being generated is not being dealt with as well".

For 2015, the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) reported the country generated 262m tonnes of municipal waste, with more than half of it sent to a landfill, reported The Guardian.

About 13 percent of the waste was plastic. Of the 262m tonnes, a little over a quarter was recycled, according to EPA.

Compared with all countries, the US performs well on the firm's recycling index. But it is one of the highest-risk countries in terms of waste generated.

Globally, more than 2.1bn tonnes of municipal waste are generated each year -- enough to fill 822,000 Olympic-size swimming pools, the report said. Only 16 percent of that waste is recycled. Humans have made 8.3bn tonnes of plastic since 1950.



Pilgrims arrive at the hajj camp in the capital's Ashkona and report, *inset*, yesterday. The first hajj flight would leave for Saudi Arabia at 7:15am today. Biman would be taking 419 pilgrims in one of its Boeing 777-300ER planes.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Fresh war crimes in Rakhine

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greater autonomy for the two states.

On June 22, authorities ordered telecoms companies to shut down internet services in the two states. Telenor Group said the ministry of transport and communications had cited "disturbances of peace and use of internet activities to coordinate illegal activities".

Yanghee Lee, the UN independent expert on human rights in Myanmar, said last week the army may be committing gross human rights violations under cover of a mobile phone blackout in Rakhine and Chan, but on Tuesday she went

further.

"The conflict with the Arakan Army in northern Rakhine State and parts of southern Chin State has continued over the past few months and the impact on civilians is devastating. Many acts of the Tatmadaw (army) and the Arakan Army violate international humanitarian law and may amount to war crimes, as well as violating human rights," Lee said.

The Arakan Army had reportedly abducted civilians, including 12 construction workers in Paletwa and 52 villagers near the Bangladesh border, she told the UN Human

Rights Council.

Lee cited reports of civilians, mostly ethnic Rakhine men, being detained and interrogated by the Tatmadaw for suspected links to the Arakan Army and said several had died in custody. In April, a military helicopter opened fire on Rohingya men and boys collecting bamboo, she said.

Some 35,000 people have fled the violence this year, she said.

Myanmar's Ambassador Kyaw Moe Tun said that the government had declared a ceasefire through August and was trying to bring about national reconciliation.

"The government of Myanmar is working tirelessly to end ethnic strife and end conflict and to achieve sustainable peace in Myanmar through a peace process," Tun told the forum.

"Freedom of expression and media is one of most visible areas of change in Myanmar," he said. "No restriction is imposed on the use of internet and social media, but we need to strike a balance between security and freedom and rights and responsibility."

Lee said the blackout was endangering villagers, obstructing aid and shielding the military.

Bangladesh marching forward

Hasina tells reception in Beijing

UNB, Beijing

Noting that Bangladesh has friendly relations with all, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said Bangladesh was marching forward and getting foreign investment as the country had no hostility to anyone.

"We have friendly relations with all. Now, Bangladesh has no hostile relation with anyone as it follows the foreign policy adopted by Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rah-man... This is why Bangladesh is marching forward and receiving investments," she said referring to Bangladesh's friendly relations with both China and India.

The prime minister made the remarks while addressing a civic reception accorded to her at Legende Hotel in Beijing.

Expatriate Bangladeshis hosted the reception under the supervision of Bangladesh Embassy in Beijing on the occasion of the prime minister's bilateral official visit to China.

Sheikh Hasina said Bangladesh

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Nine to die

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Ishwardi General Railway Police Station, filed a case against five members of the BNP and its associate bodies.

Police submitted the final report the same year but the court didn't accept it.

The court ordered the Criminal Investigation Department to reinvestigate. In April 1997, the CID submitted charge sheet against 52. Five of them died later.

The nine who got death penalty are: AKM Akteruzzaman, former president of Ishwardi municipality unit BNP; Zakaria Pintu, general secretary of the BNP unit; Mokhesur Rahman Bablu, ex-general secretary of the BNP unit and ex-mayor of Ishwardi municipality; Rezaul Karim Shahin, ex-leader of Ishwardi Government College Chhatra Dal unit; Azizur Rahman Shahin, convener of Ishwardi upazila Jubo Dal; and local BNP activists Shahidul Islam Atal, Shyamol, Mahabubur Rahman Polash and Shamsul Alam. They were also fined Tk 5 lakh each.

Of them, only Pintu is absconding.

"Following a long legal battle, the court punished all the 47 charge-sheeted accused, based on evidence and testimonies of the witnesses," Public Prosecutor Akteruzzaman Mukta said.

Additional Public Prosecutor Abdul Ahad Babu said justice has been meted out through this verdict.

"The then police officials gave the final report hurriedly in 1994 during the tenure of the then BNP-led government. But the court did not accept it."

The accused, on various occasions, tried to divert the course of the case by producing "fake witnesses" during the last tenure of the BNP-led government. But their attempt went in vain, he mentioned.

However, Masud Khandaker, a defence counsel and also vice president of Pabna district BNP, said, "We have been deprived of justice. Arguments in the case ended on July 1. This is a sensational case. The court hurriedly pronounced the verdict without examining all the testimonies."

"We will appeal against the verdict," he added.

"We are unhappy at the verdict. The verdict is not acceptable, considering

the crime," Kaiser Ahmed Piash, son of Akkel Ali who was sentenced to life imprisonment, told journalists.

Local BNP men brought out a procession on the court premises, protesting the judgment.

The ruling AL men also marched in a procession there, expressing satisfaction over the verdict.

Rezaul Rahim Lal, senior vice president of Pabna district AL, said all have the right to do politics in a democratic country, but the then BNP government tried to "stop" the AL.

"BNP cadres made the attack on Sheikh Hasina when she was carrying out political activities," he added.

BNP's STATEMENT
BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir expressed grave concern at the conviction of Pabna BNP leaders and activists in what he claimed was a "false case".

Condemning the verdict, he said the 1994 incident of attack on Sheikh Hasina in Ishwardi was "fake and fabricated".

The attack was staged by AL men to create a political issue, he claimed in a statement yesterday.

"The verdict proves that the government is trying to put dedicated BNP leaders on gallows," he added.

OTHER CONVICTS

Those given life term are Aminul Islam, Azad Hossain, Ismail Hossain, Alauddin Bishwas, Shamsur Rahman, Anisur Rahman, Akkel Ali, Md Rabi, Md Enam, Abul Kashem, Kala Babu, Mamun, Selim, Kollol, Tuhin, Shah Alam Liton, Abdulla Al Mamun, Laizu, Abdul Jabbar, Polash, Hakimuddin alias Tenu, Alamgir, Abul Kalam and AKM Firoyzul Islam.

They were also fined Tk 3 lakh each, in default of which they will have to spend two more years in jail.

Those awarded 10-year rigorous imprisonment are Nefaur Rahman Raju, Azmal Hossain, Anwar Hossain Jony, Rono, Barkat, Chand Ali, Enamul Kabir, Moktar Hossain, Hafizur Rahman Mukul, Humayun Kabir Dulal, Jamrul, Tuhin Bin Siddique and Fazlur Rahman.

They were also fined Tk 1 lakh each, in default of which they will have to spend one more year in prison.

MPO spending

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areas lagging behind like haors, chars and hills. For that, the criteria would be relaxed, they added.

Besides, there is a huge pressure from the ruling party lawmakers and influential leaders to incorporate institutions of their choice in the MPO list.

"We have almost completed the process. The announcement of fresh listing for MPO may come within a week or two," said an official of the education ministry, wishing not to be named.

In many upazilas, there are 10 to 12 good institutions which are eligible to get the MPO. But there are some areas like hills and haors where getting one to two eligible institutions is tough, he said.

"So, we want to provide MPO benefit in a way that every upazila is covered."

The MPO is the government's share in the payroll of non-government educational institutions. Under the scheme, non-government teachers get their basic pay as well as some monthly allowances from the public fund.

As per the rules, an educational institution first comes under the MPO scheme and then the

government includes the teachers of the institution in the payroll.

Currently, more than 4.50 lakh teachers and employees of 26,340 secondary schools, colleges, madrasas and technical institutions enjoy the benefits.

The BNP government had suspended the scheme in its 2001-06 tenure.

In 2010, the AL government reinstated it, bringing 1,624 more institutions under the scheme. But since then, no other institutions got the benefits.

The next year, the government spent Tk 4,992 crore for the MPO. The allocation for MPO increased to Tk 13,144 crore in the outgoing fiscal year.

Several thousand teachers and employees of government-recognised educational institutions have been demanding MPO for long. They held demonstrations and observed hunger strikes in the capital to press home their demand.

There are 5,242 non-MPO educational institutions where around 80,000 teachers are working without any pay, some for more than a decade, according to Non-MPO Shikhya Pratishthan Shikhyak Karmachari Federation.

Many of them earn their living by private tuition or other part-time jobs.

Following days-long demonstrations by teachers, the government initiated the process of listing new institutions in June last year.

The education ministry announced "Manpower Structure and MPO Policy-2018" on June 12, setting four new criteria for getting MPO -- academic approval of the institution, number of students, number of examinees and the pass rate.

In August last year, the education ministry sought online applications from educational institutions, and 9,614 applied. Of those, 5,042 are secondary schools, 1,099 colleges, 1,867 madrasas and 1,606 technical institutes.

As the ministry started scrutinising the applications for finalising the list of educational institutions eligible to get the benefit, came December 30 election, halting the process.

After the polls, the ministry started the process and found 2,762 meeting the four criteria. Then it wrote to the finance ministry for funds, and the allocation was proposed.

Two killed in 'shootouts'

STAR REPORT

Two men were killed in "gunfights" with law enforcers in Dhaka and Cox's Bazar early yesterday.

In Dhaka, a murder suspect was killed in a "gunfight" with police in Badda area.

The dead is Ramzan Mia, 36, suspected key planner of Badda Awami League leader Farhad Hossain murder, said Mashiur Rahman, deputy commissioner (DB North) of Dhaka Metropolitan Police.

The police official said Ramzan fled the country after Awami League leader Farhad was gunned down on June 15 last year.

On information of Ramzan's return to home, a team of detective branch of police conducted a drive in the capital's Satarikul area to arrest him. Sensing their presence, Ramzan and his cohorts opened fire on them, forcing the law enforcers to retaliate, Mashiur claimed.

During the "gunfight", Ramzan was caught in the line of fire and sustained bullet wounds. He was rushed to Dhaka Medical College Hospital where doctors declared him dead, the deputy commissioner added.

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Undaunted

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Birmingham. It was a novel development that the Indian expatriates knew the names of Mohammad Saifuddin and Mosaddek Hossain as they called out their names when the players went past. It hinted at Bangladesh's growing profile.

Bangladesh, ranked seventh in the world, were genuine contenders for a maiden World Cup semifinal till their penultimate match. Unlike previous historic runs like the 2015

World Cup quarterfinal and the 2017 Champions Trophy semifinal, Bangladesh were not helped by a rained-out game but rather hampered by it this time when the match against lower-ranked Sri Lanka was washed out on June 11.

As they head to London, Bangladesh would know that a win against Pakistan would give them a possibility to finish fifth in the 10-team table, making them the best of the rest. That is still something to aim for.

England in semis

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had they won this match, saw their chase start badly when Henry Nicholls was lbw for a golden duck to Chris Woakes and decided against a review that would have reprieved him.

Martin Gupthill, the leading run-scorer at the 2015 World Cup, then fell cheaply but worse followed for New Zealand when senior batsmen Kane Williamson and Ross Taylor were dismissed by contrasting run-

outs.

Black Caps skipper Williamson, who came into this match with a tournament average of 113.50, fell for 27 in unlucky fashion when fast bowler Mark Wood got his fingertips to a Taylor drive and deflected the ball onto the non-striker's stumps with Williamson out of his ground.

Taylor was far more responsible for his own exit when, deciding to go for a risky second run on 28, he failed to beat Adil Rashid's throw from fine leg

to Buttler.

After a brief stoppage when a streaker ran onto the field, the Black Caps lost Tom Latham, caught behind for 57, to leave them all but beaten at 164-7.

Earlier, Bairstow and Jason Roy (60) got England off to a flyer with an opening partnership of 123 -- their third century stand in a row.

Bairstow reached his ninth one-day international hundred off 95 balls, including 14 fours and a six.