

Malodour fouls city air

150 families in Mymensingh's Moilakanda, living beside landfill, at health risk

Md AMINUL ISLAM, Mymensingh

Obnoxious odour from an unenclosed landfill in Mymensingh city's Char Kalibari is making life miserable for residents and commuters for a long time but the authorities concerned are not paying heed to the issue.

The residents of the area, also known as Moilakanda, said they have long been demanding relocation or proper management of the dumping ground, but to no avail.

Around 150 families, who call the area home, are being forced to live amid such condition as the city corporation takes no measures to minimise the putrid stench, they alleged.

"Every day I have to bear this unpleasant smell," said Abdul Hekim, a trader.

Locals said it is also becoming a serious health risk as many are already suffering from breathing problem.

Abdur Razzaq, who owns a piece of land near the dumping ground, said he is facing setback in crop production. "The soil is losing fertility..." added the 60-year-old farmer.

Grocer Jewel Mia said customers mostly avoid his store due to bad smell.

Atiqur Rahman Raihan, a bus driver, said locals demonstrated against the nuisance in 2017 but the authorities did not take any step. Rather, they sued some 25 people on a "false" charge of vandalising garbage trucks.

"I along with some four others were detained at that time. Since then, locals have been refraining from any movement fearing harassment," said Raihan.

During a recent visit, this correspondent found parts of Mymensingh-Sherpur road adjacent to the landfill littered with garbage, hindering vehicular movement.

People from different parts of Mymensingh and Netrokona, Kishoreganj and Sherpur pass through the spot and face the putrid stench.

The city corporation, however, said they always clean garbage from the road.

Mohabbat Ali, waste management officer of Mymensingh City Corporation, said around 320 tonnes of garbage are piled up on the dumping ground on a daily basis.

The prevailing situation is also creating health and environmental hazard, said Farid Ahmed, director of Department of Environment (Mymensingh division). He said they asked the MCC authorities on various occasions to manage the garbage properly, but to no avail.

Dr HK Debnath, MCC chief medical officer, said people living in the area are at risk of being affected with diseases like asthma, respiratory problems and eye irritation.

Contacted, Chief Executive Officer of MCC Md Anwar Hossain said they have signed a memorandum of understanding with a private enterprise of Finland one and half months ago to produce electricity from waste. It will also help reduce the garbage.

Mayor Ekramul Haque Titu said after the signing, a project proposal was sent to the LGRD ministry and it will take at least six months to finalise the process. Once the formalities end, the company would start work within one and a half years, said the mayor.

Once the project is completed, the garbage menace will go away, he hoped, saying that they have no plan to relocate the landfill.

About demarcation of the ground, the mayor said, "We did not succeed despite efforts we took before."

It is difficult to erect walls around it by digging out 20-40 feet layer of garbage, he claimed.

The garbage from nearby Moilakanda landfill has spilled over to the Mymensingh-Sherpur road, where animals were spotted gathering to scavenge for food. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: STAR



This road at Sylhet city's Temukhi Tukerbazar area has transformed into an illegal stand for auto-rickshaws and microbuses. Locals say there are dozens of such illegal stands in the city that constrict roads, and there are often patronised by political leaders.

PHOTO: SHEIKH NASIR

Hosne Ara Khan passes away

CITY DESK

Hosne Ara Khan, wife of former Dhaka University teacher late Md Darwish Ali Khan, passed away yesterday at the capital's United Hospitals.

She was 84.

After her namaz-e-janaza at Azad Mosque after Zohr prayers, she was buried at Banani graveyard.

She left behind her sons Hossain Ridwan Ali Khan and Hossain Nasrat Ali Khan, who is chairperson of Persona Hair and Beauty; daughters Dr Esha Khosnu and Bipasha Aich; daughters-in-law Kanka Jamil and Kaniz Almas Khan, who is a renowned beauty expert; son-in-law renowned magician Jewel Aich; and granddaughters Nuzhat Khan and Kheyra Aich.

'Blacklist contractor responsible for attack' Demand PWD staff in Rajshahi

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Staff of Public Works Department (PWD) formed a human chain and held a rally at their Rajshahi office premises yesterday, demanding justice for the attack on their peer.

Bangladesh PWD Diploma Engineers' Association organised the programme for one hour from 11:30am. They also demanded blacklisting the contractor for the attack and cancelling all work orders given to his organisation.

On Monday, police arrested contractor Shahabul Manjur Liton and his aide Atikur Rahman for attacking the office of PWD Sub-assistant Engineer Delwar Hossain, injuring him and vandalising his office. Delwar was being treated at Rajshahi Medical College Hospital.

PWD officials, in a case filed with Rajpara Police Station, claimed Delwar was attacked because he suspended a substandard construction work.

Addressing the rally, Saiduzzaman, the association's president, said incidents of assault by contractors are common, and in most cases, engineers hide such occurrences to avoid public humiliation.

Jute traders

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Around 2,000 jute traders from across the country, who are the members of BJTA, have been supplying raw jute to 25 state-run jute mills, all of which have been closed upon a government order from July 1, according to a press release of BJTA.

From 2016-17 to 2019-20 fiscal years, these jute traders have pending bills of Tk 265 crore against the supplied raw jute for the mills, it said.

BJMC has sold jute products worth Tk 332 crore which could be spent to clear the pending bills, the release further said.

Md Jahangir Alam, a member of BJTA and one of the protesters, said, "BJMC has sold out the stockpiled products and they are using the revenues to disburse the pending salaries of their workers and officers. In the middle of it, we are failing to pay the bank loans and interests. We cannot pay our workers as the raw jute processing mills, our

only source of income, are closed. The banks have filed cases against many of us for failing to pay the instalments."

"If BJMC does not clear our bills immediately, we with our family members will be compelled to beg on the streets," added Alam.

However, BJMC has stated that it might not be possible for them to clear these pending bills within the current fiscal year.

"According to the government order, we shall pay Tk 5,000 crore to the workers to clear their due wages, arrears and other benefits within this fiscal year. Then, in the next fiscal year, we shall pay the bank loans, utility bills and dues that we owe to the jute traders. We are extremely busy in calculating each and every worker's pending wage and benefit at this moment. We have requested the jute traders to understand our situation and have patience," BJMC chairman Abdur Rouf told The Daily Star.

Redouble efforts to repatriate Rohingyas: speakers at webinar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Agencies of United Nations, international non-government organisations and the government should redouble efforts on political mobilisation for dignified return of Rohingya refugees, said civilians, NGO leaders and officials at a webinar yesterday.

Titled "Respect to frontline workers amid Covid-19, solidarity and diversity", it was organised by Cox's Bazar CSO NGO Forum, a network of 50 local NGOs working in Cox's Bazar, marking World Humanitarian Day.

Speakers came up with specific demands to strengthen efforts, adding that

international agencies should push for the cause from their bases.

It is reported that around 129 NGOs and 16,000 workers are in Cox's Bazar responding to the Rohingya crisis, where around 1,000 frontline workers got infected.

Chief guest Rashedul Islam, director general of NGO Affairs Bureau at Prime Minister's Office, said dignified return of Myanmarese nationals is the most humanitarian response.

Cox's Bazar Additional Deputy Commissioner Ashraful Afsar chaired the event, and IFRC Country Representative Azmat Ulla was the guest of honour.

Display portrait

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There is no portrait of Father of the Nation in the parliament session room at present, he said, adding that the portrait of Bangabandhu had been displayed in the parliament session room till August 15, 1975, the day when Bangabandhu and most of his family members were assassinated.

Following his another petition, the HC on August 29 last year directed the authorities concerned to preserve and display the portrait of Bangabandhu at all courtrooms across the country in next two months.

The government has implemented the directive, Advocate Subir said.

Subir Nandi Das argued for the petition while Attorney General Mahbubey Alam and Deputy Attorney General Amit Dasgupta represented state during yesterday's hearing.

Crime spikes

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Md Walid Hossain, deputy commissioner of DMP's public relations and media, said crime incidents were low as people opted not to come out during the general holiday period.

The situation changed after it was withdrawn. May be for this reason crime incidents have possibly marked a rise, he added.

"But we are alert and have been taking tough measures," Walid told The Daily Star. He said due to remaining alert, the killer of a businessman in Bashundhara residential area could be traced within a day.

Besides, they have increased police patrolling. He also said earlier many members of DMP tested positive for Covid-19. Many rejoined after recovery.

Walid said the rate of Covid-19 infection among their force members has declined sharply and police activities are going on in full force.

"We hope to contain the crime," he added.

Still unfinished

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said, "A final Tk 2.5 crore added cost was sent to the ministry for approval. Once approved, the work can be done within three months."

Khorshed Alom, Managing Director of Infinity Engineering LTD which is the contractor of the project, said, "There were revisions to the work and the cost, hence there was a delay. We also have some due bills of Tk 3 crore that we didn't receive yet. Moreover, work slumped due to the pandemic. But we are hopeful about finishing the work once this final budget is approved."

112 Bangladeshis

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protested against Vietnamese employers and Bangladeshi brokers, and demanded immediate repatriation.

However, as international flights were suspended, there was no way to repatriate them immediately, officials said.

The Bangladesh embassy in Hanoi, in cooperation with Vietnam police, accommodated nearly 100 of them in several hotels. On August 4, the embassy issued a circular that Bangladeshis who went to Vietnam for jobs, had cards issued by Bureau of Manpower Employment and Training and were willing to return home could register.

Bangabandhu's

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Ambassador Muhammad Zamir, former Chief Information Commissioner of Bangladesh, discussed on "Engagement with International Organisations and Enhancement of Multilateral Relations".

Prof Dr Syed Anwar Husain, Bangabandhu Chair at Bangladesh University of Professionals, discussed on "International Peace and Security".

Prof Dr Imtiaz Ahmed from the department of International Relations at Dhaka University discussed on "Foreign Policy and Diplomacy".

Prof Dr Selim Jahan, visiting fellow of Columbia University and University of Oxford, discussed on "Economy and Development of Bangladesh".

Senior officials from different ministries, ambassadors and high commissioners, senior civil and military officials, media, academia, teachers and students from different universities participated in the webinar.

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Date: 18 August 2020

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP) FOR FERRY OF 03 (THREE) UNITS DASH8-400 AIRCRAFT FROM TORONTO TO DHAKA

Biman Bangladesh Airlines Limited (Biman) invites Proposal/Offer from the reputed Aircraft Ferrying Company/Agency to ferry 03 (three) units of brand new Dash8-400 Aircraft from the Manufacturer facility in Toronto, Canada to Dhaka, Bangladesh.

The Proposals/Offers are to be submitted latest by 1000 hours BST (0400 hrs UTC) on 10 September 2020 addressed to General Manager Corporate Planning, Biman Bangladesh Airlines Limited, Head Office, Balaka, Dhaka-1229, Bangladesh through Courier Service or E-mail to dgpm186@bd.biman.com. The RFP Notice and Schedule may be viewed in Biman website www.biman-airlines.com.

M Masudur Rahman
General Manager Corporate Planning
Biman Bangladesh Airlines Limited

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