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Wanton neglect, irreversible loss

Tanneries keep polluting the Dhaleshwari as govt officials, factory owners stay locked in blame game over inadequate, faulty CETP in Savar

PINAKI ROY and RASHIDUL HASAN

After around two decades and countless deadlines, a tannery estate with a fully functioning CETP that would ensure the environment is not ravaged by toxic waste is still a far cry from what was planned.

Untreated industrial waste keeps polluting the Dhaleshwari river as the CETP at the country's lone tannery estate in Savar cannot function at full throttle yet. Also, it has myriad inadequacies.

For many long years, environmentalists called for the government to relocate the tanneries from Hazaribagh, a densely populated area in the city, and set up an estate with a modern effluent treatment plant on the city outskirts.

The much-awaited Savar Tannery Industrial Estate project was initiated in 2003 and the rest is a long sequence of events.

After years of foot-dragging, tanneries

Currently, the CETP can treat 25,000 cubic metres of liquid waste while 132 tanneries produce up to 40,000 cubic metres.

were shifted to Savar in 2016 and got up and running the next year. Since then, they have been releasing waste water into the river with the CETP yet to be ready for use.

The CETP finally went into operation in June this year -- nine years after the project was taken up and five years after the start of physical work.

But things did not improve much. Currently, the CETP can treat 25,000 cubic metres of liquid waste, while 132 factories at the Bangladesh Small and Cottage Industries Corporation (BSCIC) tannery estate produce up to 40,000 cubic metres.

So, on a busy day, the authorities have to release an additional 15,000 cubic metres of liquid waste directly into the river through an alternative channel, according to a recent report of the Department of Environment (DoE).

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The tannery estate in Savar releases toxic liquid into the Dhaleshwari as the treatment plant is yet to go full tilt and can not process all the waste generated by the tanneries. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HUQ



Booters bow out after 1-1 draw with Nepal

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh's hopes of reaching the final of the SAFF Championship after 16 long years were dashed in controversial fashion as a dubious penalty decision late in the game saw the men in red and green relinquish a one-goal lead against Nepal in their last group match at the National Stadium in Male yesterday.

Striker Sumon Reza had given Bangladesh a ninth-minute lead, thanks to an accurate header on

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Business

Bangladesh keeps outpacing India

Bangladesh will remain ahead of India in per capita gross domestic product for the next five years to 2026, powered by buoyancy in remittance, exports and agricultural activities, according to the International Monetary Fund. The country will have an 8 per cent higher per capita GDP at \$3,253 in 2026 than India's \$3,018.

STORY ON B1

INOPERATIVE EDS MACHINE

CAAB's laxity cost exporters

REFAYET ULLAH MIRDHA and RASHIDUL HASAN

The competition for export orders intensified amid the pandemic and the airport authorities are not making the exporters' lives any easier.

As is practice, goods sent by air through the Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport (HSIA) must be passed through the Explosive Detecting System (EDS).

But the two EDS, installed in 2017, at the HSIA are barely functioning for the past year or so thanks to the airport authorities' laxity in their maintenance.

At the same time, the Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh (CAAB) has failed to make the other two EDS operational eight months after their installation.

As a result, the exporters are facing severe delays in making their shipments at a time when timely delivery is of the essence.

They are opting to pay either higher freight charges to the airlines to avoid facing cancellation and big discounts from their international buyers.

In absence of machines, the exporters have to depend on the dog squad for completing the mandatory scanning and certification.

The dog squad can only scan 110 tonnes of cargoes in a day whereas every day more than 1,200 tonnes of cargoes are coming to the HSIA for shipping.

If the two EDS scanning machines and the dog squad work normally, the exporters can ship about 800 tonnes of cargo through the HSIA in a day.

Recently, the number of exportable goods through the HSIA increased tremendously as the importers want quick delivery of goods to fill their empty shelves

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3 killed in Chandpur

Unrest in Cumilla sparks the incident; many injured; govt orders probe

STAR REPORT

Three people were killed and many others injured yesterday as mob and police clashed in Chandpur's Hajiganj upazila while violence erupted in several districts following reports of "demeaning the Holy Quran" in Cumilla.

Authorities imposed Section 144 in Hajiganj following the violence and deployed two platoons of Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) to restore law and order, reports our Chandpur correspondent.

There were also clashes in Cumilla, Chattogram, Kurigram and Moulvibazar,

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Dev spree to go on despite odds

PM asks all to act cautiously keeping in mind disasters, risks

BSS, Dhaka

Making a vow to continue the country's development spree, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday called upon all to act cautiously keeping in mind the dangers of disasters.

"We always think the country is ours. So, the development spree will surely be continued whatever risks may arise. We will surely step forward towards the development facing everything. We have been working to pursue this goal," she said.

The PM was addressing a function marking 50 years of the Cyclone Preparedness Programme (CPP) and the International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction. She joined the event from the Gono Bhaban through videoconferencing.

Hasina said Bangladesh is becoming an ideal country to counter disasters in the world due to the government's tireless efforts.

She called upon all the people concerned to work to uphold Bangladesh's global dignity as a disaster-resilient country.

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POISONED in their habitat

Dozens of rhesus monkeys killed by farmer who encroached upon Moheshkhali forest



The bodies of two monkeys, poisoned by a farmer in Cox's Bazar, lying on the ground, left while another one is tied to a tree, right.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

MOSTAFA YOUSUF

Dozens of monkeys died in Moheshkhali forest on Tuesday after eating poisoned bananas placed as a trap by a local farmer who encroached upon the forest to cultivate his crop.

The incident took place in Baritilla Ghona area in Cox's Bazar's Moheshkhali upazila around 5:00pm, Dinur Alam, a local environmental activist and president of Green Environment Movement, told The Daily Star yesterday.

Forest department officials visited the spot and found proof that the monkeys, belonging to the rhesus macaque species, had been poisoned and identified the farmer. They did not

disclose the farmer's name as the process to file a case was underway.

They said the farmer was one of many who encroached upon the forest to cultivate their crop, and who viewed wildlife as a nuisance.

One of the monkeys was also seen hanging from a tree.

Dinur Alam said they counted around 50 monkeys killed. Many had been buried by the farmer by the time forest officials reached the spot, he added.

He accused forest officials of negligence in conserving the wildlife in the forest as most of the time they do not take any action against such acts to avoid animosity.

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Ex-minister's APS arrested

STAR REPORT

Detectives arrested AHM Fuad, assistant personal secretary of former Awami League minister Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain, in a murder case from the capital's Bashundhara area early yesterday.

"A team of Detective Branch of police arrested AHM Fuad from the Bashundhara area in Dhaka around 2:20am," Jamal Pasha, additional superintendent of police in Faridpur, told reporters.

Fuad faces eight cases, including those of money laundering and assault, he said, adding that there are also arrest warrants against him in three cases.

"AHM Fuad has been forming various armed terrorist groups, including the 'Helmet Group' and 'Hammer Group', in Faridpur town for about 10 years. He has gained a lot of illicit wealth engaging in terrorist activities," the additional SP said.

Fuad, also a former convener of Faridpur district Jubo League, was shown arrested in a murder case filed with Kotwali Police Station in Faridpur on July 12, 2016, said police.

He was placed on two-day remand in the murder case yesterday after being produced before a court with a 10-day remand appeal, said Abdul Gaffar, sub-inspector of Kotwali Police Station.

Meanwhile, Judge KM Emrul Kayesh of the Senior Special Judge's Court of Dhaka yesterday directed

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