



East Jurain: Saga of a manmade mess

MD SHAHNAWAZ KHAN CHANDAN

Ward 53 of Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC) covers most parts of East Jurain's Muradpur area. According to the 2011 census, more than 27,000 people live in this ward which, according to them, has become probably the worst place to live in Dhaka. Round the year waterlogging, unplanned urbanisation, mosquito infestation, severe dust pollution during dry seasons, and lack of open space and waste management have pushed its residents beyond their limit of endurance. Through this report, The Daily Star is presenting the major problems faced by the residents of this ward and what authorities are doing about it.

WATERLOGGING ALL YEAR LONG

Many lanes adjacent to Commissioner Road, Khorshed Ali Sarder Road, Nurani Mosque Road and Mishtir Dokan area of this ward remain submerged under filthy sewage water all over the year without any rain or flooding.

Not only the roads but also many houses along the above-mentioned streets remain flooded. Many of its inhabitants have already abandoned their submerged homes and properties, which have now become an ideal breeding ground for dengue mosquitoes.

According to the inhabitants, unplanned road restoration works and clogged sewerage systems are the main reasons behind such awful waterlogging.

UNPLANNED ROAD RESTORATION WORKS

DSCC has regularly been restoring the roads in this area by increasing their heights, however, without considering the height of the adjacent houses.

In some places such as Commissioner Road, Nurani Mosque Road and Khorshed Ali Sarder Road areas, all the



lanes and streets have been heightened up to 10 to 12 feet from their original position.

As a result, many houses and shops have become buried under these roads. Runoff water from these roads regularly floods the houses whether there is rain or no rain.

According to Md Selim Ahmed, a resident of the Nurani Mosque area, "Due to unplanned and inconsiderate road restoration works, many of our houses have become uninhabitable. Many inhabitants have abandoned their neighbourhoods. People like me who have nowhere to go in this city are being compelled to stay in this accursed place."

DENGUE OUTBREAK A REGULAR PHENOMENON

Aedes mosquito breeds in millions in the waterlogged streets and abandoned homes and as a consequence dengue fever never leaves the East Jurain

neighbourhood.

This time, at least 23 people have died of this disease in East Jurain alone so far although DSCC does not have any exact information about the death toll.

Mizanur Rahman, a resident of the ward, said, "DSCC workers rarely visit this area to kill mosquitoes. When they visit, they spray mosquito repellent with a fogger machine but do not take any step to clean the mosquito breeding grounds. As a result, their mosquito control initiatives are not working here at all."

UNBEARABLE DUST POLLUTION

Due to regular restoration of roads, a huge amount of construction materials are left scattered all over the neighbourhood causing immense dust pollution.

According to Mizanur Rahman, "DSCC never stops restoring these roads and always leaves the construction materials uncovered. The air here is

thick with heavy sands and blocks of cement. Children and elderly people in this neighbourhood are becoming sick by inhaling this polluted air."

NO SPACE TO BREATHE

The entire area does not have any open public space where its residents could spend some free time.

There is no playground for children, no open space and greenery here.

Syeda Sharmin, a mother of three children and a resident of the ward, said, "If we have to talk to our neighbours, we have no alternative to standing in the streets which are also very dirty and busy. In the afternoon, our children play in the streets with great risk of road accidents and falling into the uncovered sewerage drains."

RESIDENTS' PLEA FOR SUSTAINABLE SOLUTION

Inhabitants have been appealing to the



authorities for immediate solutions to these ever-increasing problems, which are very much linked to each other.

Mizanur Rahman said, "We are paying taxes regularly to the city corporation but hardly getting any service from them. I do now know about any such place in the entire country where people live in such an unbearable conditions. If DSCC does not come up with a sustainable solution, thousands

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Polls to be free, fair

Assures Quader, urging all parties to take part in national election

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



Awami League General Secretary Obaidul Quader yesterday assured that the next general election will be held in free and credible manner and urged all registered political parties to participate in the election.

He also said the next election will be held using electronic voting machines (EVM).

Talking to reporters at his secretariat office, Quader, also the road transport and bridges minister, said they want a strong opposition in parliament and called upon BNP to come to election.

"If BNP does not participate in the next parliamentary elections, the party will face existential crisis. So, the party will come to the election to sustain."

"Our leader Sheikh Hasina at a meeting clearly said she wants participation of all registered political parties in next national elections," he said.

About the election, the AL leader said the government will fully cooperate with the Election Commission to hold a free and fair election. The

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No fresh cross-examination of witness

Apex court observes in full text of verdict regarding graft case

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court in the full text of a verdict has observed that there is no scope for trial courts to hold fresh cross-examinations of any witness, who has already been cross-examined, in corruption cases under the relevant law.

The fresh cross-examinations of witnesses cause long delays in finishing case trials and their backlogs in the lower courts across the country, Anti-Corruption Commission's (ACC) lawyer Khurshid Alam Khan told this correspondent.

The Appellate Division also cleared the way for the lower court concerned to continue trial proceedings of a graft case filed against BNP leader and former health minister Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain.

The case was filed by the ACC on February 6, 2014, accusing the former health minister of amassing over Tk 9.54 crore between 2001 and 2006 and depositing it to a UK bank account.

"This (Appellate) Division earlier decided the same in the case of Begum Khaleda Zia Vs State and others reported in 71 DLR(AD) (2019) 9," said the text.

On April 19, a three-member bench of the Appellate Division headed by Justice Md Nuruzzaman delivered a short verdict on an ACC petition challenging an HC verdict. The HC in its verdict on January 25 directed the trial court to issue summons to prosecution witness Ferdous Ahmed Khan, an official at the prime minister's office, for a fresh cross-examination. It also allowed Khandaker Mosharraf to cross-examine Ferdous on three questions.

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PRAYER
TIMING
MAY 9



	Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
Azan	4-15	12-45	5-00	6-34	8-00
Jamaat	4-50	1-15	5-15	6-38	8-30

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

Over 64pc Rohingyas severely food insecure

Says WFP report

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

More than 64 percent of the Rohingya refugees and host community members in Cox's Bazar are severely food insecure, according to the Global Report on Food Crises 2022, prepared by World Food Programme (WFP).

In numbers, over 1.26 million of this population are between moderately and severely food insecure, stated the report. Just in the previous year (2020), the number was slightly less and stood at 1.2 million.

"The lack of income sources and livelihood opportunities compels nearly all (95 percent) of Rohingya households to be entirely dependent on humanitarian assistance," said the report released on May 4.

The current level of humanitarian assistance is not enough for 51 percent of the population to afford the "minimum expenditure basket" or the amount of expenditure needed to meet the basic

needs of a household.

The global report also mentioned that this food insecurity has resulted in more than half the children being anaemic.

Approximately 11.4 percent of the children of this population have a low weight-to-height ratio.

The grim numbers came to the fore at a time when humanitarian assistance allocated to food sectors is at an all-time low.

"In 2020, the humanitarian assistance allocated to food sectors in 55 food crisis-prone countries and territories was the lowest recorded in five years, even though the number of acutely food insecure people was the highest," said the report.

The report also mentioned that while funding for humanitarian food assistance has been falling since 2017, the current shortfall is particularly stark due to the Covid-19 induced economic slowdown and prioritisation of the public health response to the pandemic.

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Amidst the season's torrential downpour yesterday afternoon, this motorbike upturned on Mirpur Road, due to the rider's lack of caution and riding at high speed. Thankfully an accident was averted as the bus behind the bike stopped in time and a pedestrian helped the rider. This photo was taken near Asad Gate.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS