



Jirani canal covered by water hyacinth in Trimohoni Bazaar area.

PHOTO: MD ABBAS

REVIVING 4 DSCC CANALS

TK 898.73CR PROJECT

yet to start after one year

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Adil Muhammad Khan
Professor of Urban & Regional Planning
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MD ABBAS

It has been almost a year since the Dhaka South City Corporation approved a project to recover, re-excavate, and revive four major canals under its purview, but the authorities have yet to start the work.

Meanwhile, city dwellers continue to suffer from waterlogging every time it rains.

The Tk 898.73 crore project was okayed by the Executive Committee of the National Economic Council meeting on October 11 last year. It was scheduled to be completed within December 2024.

But after almost a year, the authorities now say they are yet to demarcate (setting up boundary walls or fences) the Kalunagar, Jirani, Manda, and Shyampur canals.

The total length of the canals is 19.78km, of which, Kalanagar is 2.4km, Jirani is 3.9km, Manda is 8.7km, and Shyampur 4.78km.

Besides, 38.06km boundary walls,

FOUR CANALS
Kalunagar (2.4km) Jirani (3.9km) Manda (8.7km) Shyampur (4.78)
PROJECT AT A GLANCE
Total budget Tk 898.73cr Total length of canals 19.78km Ecnecc okayed it on Oct 11, 2022 Time of completion Dec 2024
KEY FEATURES
38.06km boundary walls 36 pedestrian bridges 19 vehicle bridges 32.44km walkways

half kilometres and a width varying from 12 to 50 feet. While visiting the North Manda area, this newspaper observed that sections of the canal which falls in this locality had also dried up and was filled with garbage.

The same story unfolded on September 10 while visiting Kutubkhali and Jatrabari areas to check the state of the Shyampur canal.

This waterbody was also filled with trash, with no trace of water.

Similarly, during a visit to the Kalungar Canal in Hajaribag's Sluice Gate area on September 15, this correspondent found filthy black water, with garbage piled up on it.

Contacted, Chittaranjan Das, councillor of Ward 5, said both Manda and Jirani canals need to be dug immediately.

"The Jirani canal was in a good shape last year, but now it's filled



Due to a thick layer of waste, water cannot flow through Kalunagar canal in Hazaribagh Sluice Gate area.



In many places, structures have been erected encroaching upon the Shyampur canal, further blocking its flow. The photo was taken in Zia Sarani area recently.



With piled up garbage and illegally built structures, it's really hard to believe this is actually the Manda canal. The photo was taken in North Manda area recently.

demarcation of the canals according to the cadastral and revised surveys," he said. The design will be published soon.

Asked about the project delay, he said they floated a tender a month ago, and contractors were also appointed in this regard. The full re-excavation works will start soon, he claimed.

Despite Mayor Sheikh Fazle Noor Taposh's assurance on May 16 that rainwater wouldn't remain on the roads for more than half an hour this monsoon, recent heavy rains, including the one on September 21 led to waterlogging in various DSCC areas.

The areas include: Babu Bazar, Nazirabazar, Kazi Alauddin Road, Green Road, Kathalbagh, Mugda, Basabo Tempo Stand, Jurain Medical Road, Muradpur High School Road, Alambagh, Kusumbagh, and Outer Circular Road. In some places, Khan of Jahangirnagar University's Urban & Regional Planning Department, said the city corporation has shown short-sightedness by not starting the re-excavation work of the four canals.

"It is a regular work of the city corporation to clean canals in order to maintain water flow. Unfortunately, it did not do so, resulting in sufferings of city dwellers," he said.

Prof Adil also said if the city corporation does not take steps against the people responsible for dumping garbage on the canals and the city dwellers themselves don't become aware in this regard, re-excavating the waterbodies will not bear any fruit.

Mentionable, DSCC and Dhaka North City Corporation formally took over the responsibilities of 26 canals and 10 kilometres of box culverts from Dhaka Wasa on December 31,

CURRENT STATE

Filled with waste, hyacinth

Dried up in many places

Murky, smelly water

Fails to contain rainwater

36 pedestrian bridges, 19 bridges for vehicular movement, 10 public toilets, 32.44km walkways, four plazas, bicycle lanes, and 771 lights will also be set up as part of the project, according to officials.

While visiting the four canals at different times during this month, this correspondent found that the waterbodies were filled with garbage and hyacinth.

In many places, structures have been erected encroaching upon the waterbodies, further blocking their flow.

The Jirani canal passes through wards 4, 5, 74, and 75 of DSCC. It starts under the Kusumbagh bridge in Sabujbagh and joins the Balu river

near Trimohani Bazar after a distance of about four kilometers.

Rainwater from Shantinagar, Naya Paltan, Motijheel, Kamalapur, Maniknagar, Sabujbagh, and Khilgaon areas of the capital flows into the river through this canal.

During a visit on September 2 in the Trimohani area, this correspondent observed that a substantial portion of the canal had completely dried up, with garbage piled up over it. After walking for a few minutes, water was finally seen in a smaller section of the canal, albeit without any noticeable flow.

The Manda canal appeared to be in a similar state. On paper, it boasts a length of approximately eight and a

with garbage. We need to remove the trash promptly and make it suitable for water to flow through it again," he said.

Akbar Hossain, councillor of Ward 75, said, "In the last two years, no efforts have been seen to remove wastes from the Jirani canal. If heavy rain, like the one on September 21, occurs in the future, parts of the city will see waterlogging again as the canal fails to contain rainwater."

Contacted, Khairul Baker, DSCC engineer and coordinator of the canal re-excavation project, told the newspaper that they have already appointed two consultant firms in this regard.

"We are now working on the



(L) A narrowed-down section of Kalunagar canal in Hazaribagh. Due to a lack of cleaning activities, the water of the canal has become murky. (R) Household waste continues to clog the Shyampur canal in Mohammadbagh area.



the water did not recede until the following day.

Contacted, Prof Adil Muhammad

2020, aiming to reduce waterlogging. Of them, DSCC took charge of 11 canals.