

BRAHMAPUTRA RIVER

Dumping of garbage continues unabated

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

Mymensingh City Corporation workers have continued to dump garbage into the Brahmaputra river at city's Jubilee Ghat area, local residents alleged.

They said the MCC workers have been bringing garbage to the river bank using hand trolleys and discarding the wastes there. This has been going on for months, they added.

The 283-kilometre-long Brahmaputra river, stretching from Jamalpur's Dewanganj upazila till joining the Meghna river in Kishoreganj's Bhairab upazila, has long been in peril due to indiscriminate pollution, siltation and encroachment. The dumping of wastes into the river, that too by the city authorities themselves, further exacerbated the river's ordeals.



Visited Jubilee Ghat area recently, this correspondent saw a huge pile of concrete and other wastes on the site.

The locals also alleged that a section of people living in the river's vicinity have been discarding their household wastes into the river.

"During monsoon, the wastes are washed into the river, polluting its water and threatening the river's ecosystem

and biodiversity. Lack of monitoring by concerned authorities has led the situation to deteriorate further," said Arafat Hossain Anik, a resident of Jubilee Ghat area.

"While the MCC authorities have the responsibility to safeguard the waterbodies within the city areas, they have instead paved way for the river's impending doom by dumping wastes into it themselves," said Advocate Md Nazrul Islam Chhunu, convener of Jonouddiyogh, a civil society forum.

He urged MCC and Bangladesh Water Development Board authorities to take prompt steps to stop this menace and save the river from pollution to prevent possible disasters to the environment in future.

Advocate Shibbir Ahmed Liton, secretary of Mymensingh Poribesh Rokhha O Unnayan Andolon, said memorandums were submitted to the Mymensingh deputy commissioner and MCC mayor repeatedly in this regard but no fruitful action has been taken yet.

Mohabbat Ali, waste management officer of MCC, said they will remove the wastes dumped into the river soon, adding that they will also ensure vigilance to prevent dumping of wastes into the river.

Make internet safe

FROM PAGE 3

me vulnerable, and creates anarchy, should I allow it? Due to online campaigns, sex workers are beaten in the streets. Should I allow that? What should we do about it? These are the questions I am raising to you."

To combat this, there is a need for regulations, sanctions and clear definitions. She also highlighted the need for guidelines to address the spread of hatred against women, their characters, attire, etc, especially through religious sermons.

The adviser emphasised that what happens online has real world consequences.

"It affects real life, including suicide cases. The abusive language predominantly used online comes from male users. When someone uses offensive language, 100 more follow suit. The impact of this online behaviour shapes our children's reality. Freedom must always come with responsibility."

Shaveena Z Anam, manager of New Content and Audience Research at The Daily Star, said, "I have spent an unhealthy amount of time looking at comment

sections on The Daily Star's Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, and other platforms, I've tried to understand the different audiences. The content that outrages us the most often appears in the feeds. The language around these topics is repetitive."

Frank Werner, director of the Goethe-Institut Bangladesh, reiterated their strategy to provide safe spaces for free speech. He stressed the importance of changing men's mindsets to combat violence against women.

The event was moderated by Nazia Manzoor, editor of DS Books and Literature at The Daily Star.

Katerina Don, curator of the Her Story Foundation and Supreme Court Advocate Barrister Priya Ahsan Chowdhury also spoke among others.

Sherpur jail

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other tasks remain unfinished. He added that the reopening aims to alleviate the burden of transferring inmates to Jamalpur, with new and old detainees being brought to the Sherpur facility.

Amend national energy policies

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She said, "We all want to bring some changes in the country. But we have been struggling to control the damage which was done by the ousted government during over the last 16 years."

"It will be clear to you when we start to repay the debts of the country's nuclear power plant."

The number of the debt payments is "unimaginable" and one of the main reasons why the interim government couldn't start their new planning, she added.

She said they have been preparing a target of net-zero carbon emission, which would be achievable after consulting with all other ministries.

Iftekharruzzaman, executive director of Transparency International Bangladesh, said, "Integrated Energy Master Plan should be cancelled. A new power and energy master plan should be developed and adopted which will be based on the principle of reducing fossil fuel use and increasing renewable energy."

He stressed the need for transparency and accountability in the power and energy sector.

All the deals conducted in this sector should be open for all. It should be awarded based on a proper tendering process.

Zahidul Alam, vice

president of the Bangladesh Solar and Renewable Energy Association, said, "If the import duties for renewable energy accessories are not reduced, the country will never reach the target of 30 percent renewable energy by 2030."

A delectable Bhola

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without this curd. It is deeply connected with the culture of the people of Bhola."

Locals even eat this curd with rice at the end of their meals. Some opt to have it with chira or muri along with a sprinkle of sugar.

This curd helps keep people cool on a hot day and contains calcium, protein, vitamins, etc., which are essential for our bodies, according to the District Livestock Department.

Locals also said that during winter, buffalo curd mixed with date molasses and duck meat is a very popular item.

Curd makers said they have been in this business

for multiple generations. Usually, milk is bought wholesale from the market for Tk 120 per kg.

A pot of 1.5 kg buffalo curd is then sold for Tk 250, while a 2 kg pot sells for Tk 350.

District Livestock Officer Md Rafiqul Islam Khan said in Bhola district, 3,200 farmers are rearing 1.24 lakh buffaloes.

These buffaloes produce 5,000-7,000 tonnes of milk daily, he added.

"Buffalo curd was recognised as a GI product on September 24. Now, a multi purpose industrial enterprise can be established, where this product can then become a significant export for the country," he added.

Boats row here no more

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THE LOST CANALS
Dhaka's waterways, once its veins, have become ghosts of their former selves.

Canals like Hazaribagh, Rayerbazar, Ramchandrapur, Katsur, Gabtoli, Kallyanpur, Dhanmondi, Razabazar, Kathalbagan, Paribagh and Begunbari have lost their navigability.

Many are now choked by encroachments and garbage or buried under concrete roads and box culverts.

The construction of roads by encroaching upon the waterways further deepened the problem.

By the 1990s, the docks of Karwan Bazar had transformed into relics of a bygone era.

Dhaka has lost 120km of canals, covering 307 hectares, due to encroachment, unplanned urbanisation, and negligence, according to a 2022 study by the River and Delta Research Centre (RDRC).

The study, led by Mohammad Azaz of RDRC, compared the 1880-1940 Cadastral Survey with satellite images from 2022.

The decline of Dhaka's waterways represents more than a shift in transportation; it marks the loss of a culture intrinsically tied to the city's identity, experts told this correspondent.

Rowing boats in Dhaka was not merely a mode of transport, but a livelihood for many and a connection to the city's ecological balance, they added.

Today, Dhaka struggles with its swelling population and relentless urbanisation.

Traffic congestion has become a daily nightmare, and the city's clogged drains and waterlogging during monsoons are reminders of the price paid for sidelining its waterways.

IMPACT OF INFRASTRUCTURE ON CANALS

The construction of box culverts and roads worsened the situation, reducing many canals to mere names, while others vanished entirely, said experts.

Former BWDB Chief Engineer (central zone) Abul Kalam Azad said the embankment, built between 1992 and 2003, included three stormwater pumping stations at Goran Chatbari, Kallyanpur, and Dholaikhal, alongside 54 sluice gates.

Dr Ainun Nishat, a water resources and climate change specialist, said Dhaka's original development centred on the eastern bank of the Buriganga.

The city expanded to the east and north as those areas were highlands. Adabor and Kallyanpur, now densely populated

residential areas, were once regularly submerged until 1987.

Nishat recalled large boats navigating areas like Russell Square and Rampura in the 1970s and 1980s.

"A canal once flowed from the bedding shops at Nilkhet, with one lane of the road in front of Eden Mohila College serving as a waterway," he said.

MISSED OPPORTUNITIES IN FLOOD MANAGEMENT
The embankment construction followed the devastating 1988 flood.

While the government approved II guiding principles of flood management in 1989, including environmental considerations and open canal mouths, these recommendations were largely ignored.

Smaller sluice gates were built to reduce costs, limiting water flow and navigation.

Nishat, one of the key architects of the management principles, said, "We urged the government to focus on road networks rather than embankments, which could have preserved marshlands in the western part of the city."

He emphasised that larger sluice gates and boat-crossing facilities could have maintained navigability, allowing people to access rivers via canals.

ALARMING RAINFALL PATTERNS
The current state of Dhaka's waterbodies is particularly concerning considering the shifting rainfall patterns.

Nishat highlighted recent instances of extreme rainfall - 350mm in a day in Khagrachhari and nearby areas, and 200-250mm in Mymensingh-Netrakona.

"Dhaka can face 300mm of rainfall at any time. Even with 50mm of rain, half the city floods. If rainfall reaches 100mm, 60-70 percent of the city gets submerged. A 300mm event would be catastrophic," Nishat warned.

The experts called for urgent government action to recover canals based on Cadastral Survey (CS) and Revisional Survey (RS) maps.

Reviving circular navigation routes, even through land acquisition, is essential, they said.

"The courage to reclaim these canals is lacking in political governments," Nishat said.

"This interim government has a unique opportunity to act. It may be the last chance to recover these waterways before it's too late."

He said Dhaka's natural drainage system once relied on the Balu River in the east, the Shitalakhya in the southeast, the Turag and Bangshi in the west, and the Buriganga and Dhaleswari in the southwest.

These rivers were interconnected by canals, forming a circular waterway around the city.

"In developed countries, navigable canals are preserved, with water buses providing smooth transport. Dhaka must follow suit to ensure its survival," Nishat said.

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Good Change for the World

Keeping a painful

FROM PAGE 5

India, described the harrowing scenes he encountered. "We found men and women in captivity, many in critical condition. We sent them to hospitals, but countless lives were already lost."

Today, only two torture cells and three bunkers around the WDB site in Barishal have been preserved, despite there being several more. Survivors and local freedom fighters fear that without urgent action, these sites of immense historical significance could be lost forever.

"These cells are not just remnants of our past; they are a painful reminder of the price we paid for independence," said Jamal. "If we don't preserve them, the memories of the Liberation War will fade, and future generations will never know the sacrifices made."

The calls for preservation are growing louder. Local freedom fighters and victims emphasise the need to formally recognise and protect the remaining torture cells and bunkers.

They argue that these sites must stand as enduring symbols of resilience and resistance.

As the nation continues to celebrate the hard-fought freedom of 1971, the memories of those who suffered in places like the WDB torture cells demand a place in history. "Preserving these sites isn't just about remembering the past," said Bhulu. "It's about honouring the martyrs and ensuring their sacrifices are never forgotten."

For families like Jamal's, the preservation of the WDB torture cells is deeply personal. "Every time I come here, I relive those days," he said. "It's painful, but it's also necessary. These places tell the story of our Liberation War - a story we cannot afford to lose."

PRAYER TIMING
DECEMBER 14

Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN 5:20	12:45	3:45	5:22	7:00
JAMAAT 5:55	1:15	4:00	5:25	7:30

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

The art of resistance

FROM PAGE 3

Cartoonist Natasha Jahan, whose work highlights gender-based violence, said, "We are seeing cartoons in this exhibition that are different from those we usually see at other exhibitions. Through my artwork, I wanted to raise awareness regarding gender-based violence."

Mong Shonie, another artist and student at Dhaka University, added, "There was a sense of distance between the artists who had been working individually from different places. Finally, we've found a platform to come together. It feels amazing to see everyone's work displayed together."

Visitors echoed the artists' enthusiasm. Shantum Sarkar, a student of Bangladesh International Tutorial Limited, said, "I like the exhibition because these issues are things I always see in newspapers, but watching them come to life in the form of art is very captivating."

Kazi Rafsan Mahboob, another visitor, said, "The inner messages of the artworks feel deep and trigger philosophical thinking. I urge everyone to come with an open mind and allow enough time to appreciate the art."

The exhibition features contributions from renowned and emerging artists, including Mong Shonie, Natasha Jahan, Mati Bala, Adhora Pototry, Purnota Sondhi, Syed Rashed Imam Tanmoy, and Morshed Mishu.

Other contributors include Arafat Karim, Anwar Sohel, Arham Habib, Arindam Kundu Ayan, Debadrita Peu, Fahim Anzom Rumman, Jahid Jamil, Biplob Chakroborty, Nahfia Jahan Monni, Derril Audri Roy, Rajib Kanti Roy, Rehnuma Proshoon, Reesham Shahab Tirtho, Salman Sakib Shahryar, Tahsin Ahmed Akib, Mehedi Haque, Nasreen Sultana Mitu, and Rafid Ariyan.

Their works, ranging from illustrations to striking digital art, carry sharp critiques of systemic injustices and resonate with audiences through wit and symbolism.

Chittagong University of Engineering & Technology
Chattogram-4349, Bangladesh
Ph. D./M.Sc. Engg./M. Engg./MURP/M.Sc./PG. Dip. (EQE) Program

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Name of the Department/Institute	Program
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Department of Disaster Engineering and Management	M. Sc. Engg./M. Engg.
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Important Deadlines:

Sl	Descriptions	Date
1.	Start date of application (Online)	15/12/2024 (9:00AM)
2.	Last date of application submission (Online)	05/01/2025 (5:00 PM)
3.	Publication of the list of eligible candidates	09/01/2025
4.	Date of admission test	14/01/2025
5.	Publication of the list of selected candidates	20/01/2025
6.	Date of admission & registration	26/01/2025 & 27/01/2025
7.	Start date of class	27/01/2025

//Signed//
(Prof. Dr. Sheikh Muhammad Humayun Kabir)
Registrar (Additional Charge), CUET

GD-1183