

ক্ষুণ্ণ ও নিরাপদে রেমিট্যান্স পাঠান
প্রিয়জনের প্রয়োজনে...

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DHAKA'S DYING RIVERS

Pollution sources nearly doubled in 5 years

HELEMUL ALAM

The rivers encircling Dhaka have been gasping for survival for decades, choked by pollution and encroachment.

Recent data, however, shows that the situation is deteriorating further -- and may be worse than previously imagined. A study conducted by the River and Delta Research Centre (RDRC) in January revealed that pollution sources around Dhaka's rivers have nearly doubled over the last five years, surging from 608 to 1,024.

The RDRC study, conducted in January using high-resolution satellite imagery and field surveys, exposes the breadth of pollutants choking the Buriganga, Turag, Shitalakhya, Balu, Tongi Canal, Karnatali, and Dhaleswari rivers. The findings revealed 102 industrial waste outlets discharging untreated pollutants into the waterways, along with 75 municipal sewerage lines and 216 small private sewerage outlets spewing domestic and industrial waste.

Additionally, the study highlighted 38 sluice gates and 62 service canals acting as conduits for contaminants, while 144 large dumping stations and 297 smaller dumping points worsened the situation with

STUDY AT A GLANCE

- Industrial waste, municipal sewage significantly contribute to pollution
- Many small private outlets discharge untreated waste
- Sluice gates, canals facilitate pollutant flow
- Waste disposal issues worsen environmental crisis
- Past government investments failed to reduce pollution
- Lack of enforcement hampers effective pollution control
- Legal protections for rivers remain largely ineffective

indiscriminate waste disposal. Dockyards, numbering 12, along with 46 industries and 36 kitchen markets, were also identified as major contributors to the pollution.

Dr Md Kamruzzaman, director general of the Department of Environment, said the department is yet to receive the final report.

"Once we have the full report, we will

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WORLD WETLANDS DAY. The Buriganga is now more of a mixture of pollutants -- chemical, household and medical wastes, sewage, dead animals, plastics and oil -- instead of the thriving river it once used to be. The intense degradation of its water quality has long been detrimental to the environment and the river ecosystem. Once considered Dhaka's lifeline, the river bears the brunt of pollution, with 506 sources identified as contributors. These include 12 industrial waste lines and 20 large municipal sewerage lines, alongside 167 small private sewerage outlets discharging untreated waste, according to recent data.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

THE WAIT IS OVER!

Month-long Ekushey Boi Mela kicks off

DIPAN NANDY

The atmosphere around Dhaka University was filled with a special energy yesterday, reflected in the streets and the eager faces of visitors.

After all, it was the first day of the month-long festival of books.

As soon as the clock struck 5:00pm and the gates of Suhrawardy Udyan opened, enthusiastic book lovers poured into the fairgrounds, exploring the vast collection of literary works.

Earlier in the day, Chief Adviser Professor Muhammad Yunus inaugurated the Amar Ekushey Boi Mela at 3:00pm.

The theme of this year's book fair, "July Gono-Obbhutthan: Natun Bangladesh Binirman," carries profound significance, coming in the wake of the July uprising that led to the fall of the Awami League government. The echoes of that movement resonate throughout the fair, transforming it into not only



PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

a celebration of literature but also a reflection on the power of people's voices.

The influence of the July uprising is particularly evident in the newly introduced "July Corner," dedicated to showcasing literature and narratives surrounding the movement.

The colours chosen for this year's fair -- red, black, and

white -- hold deep symbolism: red represents revolution, black signifies mourning, and white symbolises the eternal lamp of hope.

As in previous years, commercial publishing houses have set up their stalls at Suhrawardy Udyan, while government-run offices, autonomous bodies, and social

organisations occupy spaces within the Bangla Academy premises.

During a visit, this correspondent saw crowds gathered around popular publishing houses such as Anyapokash, UPL, Anannya Prakashan, Batighor, Agami, Kotha Prakash, and many others, eagerly browsing and purchasing their favourite books.

While some stalls were still finalising decorations, the festive spirit remained undiminished.

"I have been eagerly waiting for this day. I love reading books, especially on historical topics," said Jahangir Alam, a student at Dhaka University.

His younger brother, fifth-grader Abu Humaira, added, "I prefer horror stories -- they are more thrilling."

Atika Anwar, a private university student, said, "Even though it's just the first day, I couldn't resist coming. I've been visiting the fair since my college days."

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Cancer accounts for 12pc of annual deaths

Says BSMMU study

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Cancer is responsible for 11.9 percent of all deaths in Bangladesh annually, according to a new study by the Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University.

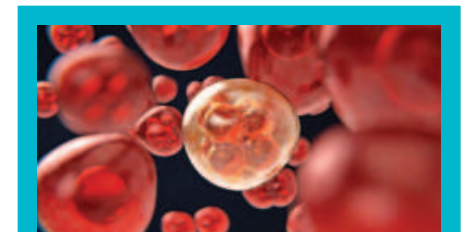
Also, 52.9 new cases are reported per 100,000 people every year, said the population-based cancer registry by BSMMU's Department of Public Health and Informatics (DPHI).

Among the 38 different cancers prevalent in the country, lung cancer (11.4 percent) causes the most deaths, followed by laryngeal cancer (8.5 percent), and stomach cancer (5.7 percent), the study also revealed.

The cancer prevalence in the country at present is 106 cases per 100,000 population -- with 118 per 100,000 among males and 96 per 100,000 among females, according to the study.

The findings were shared at a programme titled "Cancer Burden in Bangladesh: Evidence from a Population-based Cancer Registry", organised by BSMMU at its Super Specialised Hospital in Dhaka yesterday.

Laryngeal cancer was found to be the most prevalent (13 percent) among males, followed by stomach cancer (10.4



- 52.9 new cancer patients per 1 lakh annually
- 38 different cancers prevalent
- Laryngeal cancer most prevalent among men
- Breast cancer most prevalent among women
- 46pc of all cancer cases linked to tobacco use

percent), lungs (8.7 percent), lip and oral cavity (7 percent) and esophagus cancer (6.1 percent), said Md Khalequzzaman, associate professor of DPHI at BSMMU and principal investigator of the study, while presenting the findings.

In females, breast cancer (36.4 percent) was the most common cancer, followed by cervical cancer (11.1 percent), lip and oral cavity (10.1 percent), thyroid (7.1 percent) and ovaries (5.1 percent), he added.

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'Stand by us'

Families of July martyrs demand justice, rehabilitation; threaten hunger strike for govt 'inaction'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Family members of those martyred during the July-August mass uprising have accused the interim government of neglecting their plight and failing to deliver justice.

At a press conference held in front of Jatiya Press Club yesterday, they alleged that the government has made no significant progress in arresting or prosecuting those responsible for the killings, nor has it officially recognised the martyrs.

Many families are living in dire conditions, they claimed, as no steps have been taken to rehabilitate them.

The families announced they would begin a sit-in and hunger strike on February 4 if their demands are not met by tomorrow. At least 20 relatives of the martyrs, including mothers, fathers, siblings, spouses, and children, spoke at the event titled "Ensuring Immediate Arrest and Trial of All Perpetrators, and Securing the Just Demands of the Martyrs' Families."

Bithi Akter, widow of Hafizur Rahman, who was shot in Agargaon on August 5 and died on August 16, said, "If you cannot fulfil our demands, then kill us too. We have no reason to live anymore."

"My child asks for food and clothes, but I cannot provide. My landlord doesn't excuse the rent for a single month. If the government refuses our demands, then kill us, kill our children too -- we'll all become martyrs, and no one will remain to protest on the streets," she said.

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At least 20 family members of those martyred in the July uprising held a human chain in front of Jatiya Press Club yesterday, demanding that the government immediately arrest or prosecute those responsible for the killings and officially recognise the martyrs. They also said many families are living in dire conditions as no steps have been taken to rehabilitate them.

PHOTO: STAR

Energy laws lack transparency

Speakers tell roundtable

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

People deserves transparency regarding the laws governing the energy sector, speakers said at a roundtable yesterday.

"People are not aware of the national energy policies and how they impact them," said Dr Kamal Hossain, an eminent jurist.

The discussion was organised by Lawyers for Energy, Environment and Development, Coastal Livelihood and Environmental Action Network (CLEAN), and the Bangladesh Working Group on Ecology and Development, who launched a book compiling 22 laws pertaining to the energy sector of Bangladesh.

The discussion was held at the Bishwo Shahitto Kendro.

Hasan Mehedi, chief executive of CLEAN, questioned how the country could aim to generate 40 percent of its energy from renewable sources when it has not repealed past policies focusing on the expansion of fossil fuel-powered energy sources.

People are not aware of the national energy policies and how they impact them.

Dr Kamal Hossain

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