

Lax monitoring lets industrial waste pollute waterbodies

MIRZA SHAKIL, Tangail

Discharge of untreated and potentially hazardous industrial waste from dyeing and printing units of mills and factories in Tangail has long been indiscriminately polluting the rivers and other waterbodies across the district amid lax monitoring by the authorities concerned.

Lives and livelihoods of local people, as well as the aquatic biodiversity have been severely affected adversely due to pollution of these waterbodies over the years.

According to sources at the Department of Environment in Tangail, there are more than 15 mills and factories in Mirzapur upazila alone, including Gorai Industrial Area, as well as two mills in BSCIC Industrial area and adjacent Khudirampur under Sadar upazila.

The mills and factories have Effluent Treatment Plants (ETPs), the sources said.

During a recent visit, this correspondent saw that the water of Sohagpara and Pakulla canals in Mirzapur upazila has turned pitch black due to pollution caused by discharge of untreated waste from the adjacent mills and factories.

Locals alleged that most of the industries have yet to install ETPs following rules and as per capacity, while those that have ETPs installed keep those non-operational to minimize costs. As such, all these mills and factories

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Locals catching crabs from Dhaki River near the Sundarbans. Many residents of villages near the mangrove forest rely on catching fish and crabs to make a living. During low tide, they catch crabs, with an average daily catch of 5-7kg. Depending on size, they sell each kilogramme for Tk 200-800 in the local market. The photo was taken from Dakop upazila, Khulna yesterday.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

Three killed in road accidents

STAR REPORT

At least three persons were killed and three others were injured in road accidents in two districts yesterday.

In Faridpur Sadar upazila, a watermelon-laden truck lost control and hit a motorcycle and an auto rickshaw, leaving two persons dead and one other injured.

The deceased are Nayan Sheikh, 22, of Chadpur area, and Shahjahan Sheikh, 54, of Mondia village, said police.

In Thakurgaon Sadar upazila, an excavator-laden trolley collided with a three-wheeler early yesterday, killing one person and injuring two.

The deceased -- Shamsul Alam, 45 -- was from Shabdighi village in Thakurgaon.

The incident took place at around 12:30am on Thakurgaon-Baliadangi road in Bhalajan Velpukur village under the upazila. Three passengers of the three-wheeler were injured in the accident.

Firefighters rescued the injured. After the injured were taken to Thakurgaon 250-bed Modern Hospital, the on-duty doctor declared Shamsul dead.

The other two victims are now undergoing treatment at the hospital, said Dr Rokibul Alam, resident medical officer of the hospital.

Turning rodents into revenue

Homemaker finds success in albino rat farming

JAHID HASAN, Shariatpur

Laboni Akter, a resident of Dhaka's Khilgaon, after completing her post-graduation in Zoology from Khilgaon Model College, sought a unique venture to achieve financial solvency.

For around a year, she has been raising albino rats of a foreign breed in Tulashar village of Shariatpur Sadar upazila.

When asked what motivated her to set up a farm of albino rats, which is reportedly the first of its kind in the country, Laboni said these rats are essential for research purposes.

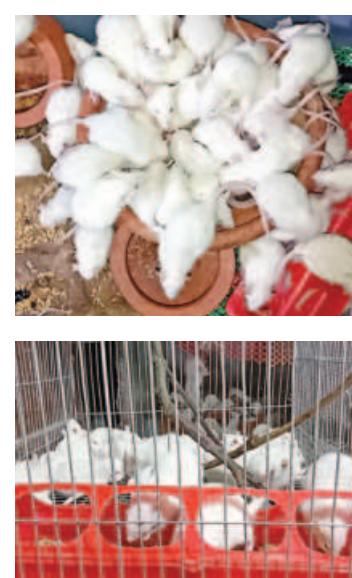
"Different laboratories and university students require foreign albino rats for research, which are not easily available in Bangladesh. As a zoology graduate, I knew it is relatively easy to breed and rear rats."

CHANGE MAKER

So, this sparked the idea of starting a rat farm," she explained.

A homemaker and mother of two, Laboni launched her farm in July 2024 with an initial investment of Tk 1,500 in Shariatpur, from where her husband Md Rakib hailed.

Her husband provided her the initial investment and purchased four Swiss albino rats, a popular breed from Switzerland, for Tk



1,000 and two cages for Tk 500.

Even though she had no formal training in rat farming, Laboni began learning on her own from Google and YouTube about how to ensure the ideal environment, provide the right diet, and treat illnesses for the rats.

By October, the rats had their first litter of ten babies. Currently, she has 40 parent rats that produce about 200 babies every month, which she primarily sells to laboratories and other farms.

At present, her farm has around 350 rats, including parent stock and litter.

She sells 200 baby rats at Tk 100 each monthly, generating around Tk 20,000, making a net

profit of Tk 15,000 per month.

"My first buyer was a snake breeder from Narayanganj. I sold 20 baby rats at Tk 50 each," Laboni said.

However, since she has been selling the rats through middlemen, it reduces her profit. These middlemen buy the rats from her at Tk 100 each and later sell those for Tk 200-250 each to the laboratories.

Laboni aspires to expand her farm by establishing direct contracts with research laboratories and universities to eliminate middlemen and sell at fair prices.

She also wants to encourage more women in Shariatpur to engage in different

entrepreneurial ventures with minimal investment and achieve financial solvency.

Laboni believes that if she could have training on rat farming, alongside support and dedicated land, it could help her expand her venture and create employment opportunities for other women.

"My husband and mother-in-law have been my biggest support in this journey," she said.

Contacted, Ilora Yasmin, upazila nibabhi officer of Shariatpur Sadar upazila, lauded Laboni's initiative.

"Her initiative is undoubtedly remarkable. If Laboni approaches us, we will provide her with all possible support," she said.

ACC sues Inu, SK Sur, 3 others

Launches probe against Sheikh Selim

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Anti-Corruption Commission has filed separate cases against former information minister Hasanul Haque Inu and his wife and former lawmaker Afroza Haque, former deputy governor of Bangladesh Bank Sitangshu Kumar Sur Chowdhury, his wife Suparna Sur Chowdhury and daughter Nandita Sur Chowdhury.

The anti-graft body also launched an investigation against former health minister Sheikh Fazlul Karim Selim over allegations of taking 10-15 percent commissions from contractors in different projects across the country.

ACC Director General Akhtar Hossain confirmed the developments at the commission's headquarters in Dhaka's Segunbagicha yesterday.

Inu and Afroza were accused of acquiring illegal wealth worth Tk 4.84 crore and Tk 1.50 crore respectively. Additionally, Inu allegedly conducted suspicious transactions worth Tk 11.88 crore from his four bank accounts.

ACC also filed three separate cases against SK Sur, his wife and daughter over abusing power, acquiring wealth illegally and conducting suspicious bank transactions. In the cases, SK Sur has been made accused of acquiring and possessing Tk 1.99 crore wealth beyond his known sources of income, possessing US\$ 169,300 and 55,000 euro in foreign currencies, and 1,005.4 grammes of gold ornaments valued at around Tk 5.96 crore.

SK Sur's wife Suparna allegedly acquired and possessed Tk 4.10 crore in wealth beyond her known sources of income with assistance of her husband, while their daughter Nandita was made accused of illicitly acquiring and possessing assets worth Tk 74.71 lakh by abusing her father's power.

Regarding the investigation launched against Sheikh Selim, Akhtar Hossain said, "There are allegations that Sheikh Selim abused his power by awarding work orders for projects worth Tk 1,300 crore to preferred contractors in exchange for commissions."

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| SSC/O-Level, HSC/A-Level, or Equivalents | CGPA 4.75 out of 5.00 and Minimum 4A & 1B in O-Level and Minimum 1A & 1B in A-Level | CGPA 4.50 out of 5.00 and Minimum 3A & 2B in O-Level and Minimum 2B in A-Level |
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- Ideal candidate should be self-motivated, conversant with MS Office and must have willingness to work anywhere in the country;
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| Position | Monthly Consolidated Pay | To be confirmed as | Monthly Gross Salary |
| MTO | Tk 49,500.00 | First Executive Officer | Tk 71,500.00 |
| PO | Tk 38,500.00 | Assistant Executive Officer | Tk 52,955.00 |

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Two children drown in pond in M'singh

OUR CORRESPONDENT,
Mymensingh

Two siblings children drowned in a pond at Ranigoan village in Mymensingh's Dhabaura upazila yesterday afternoon.

The victims -- identified as Shimu Akter, 9, and her three-year-old brother Md Nijhum Mia -- are the children of Endadul Haque of Ranigoan village, police said.

Quoting family members, sub-inspector Md Milon Miah of Dhabaura Police Station, who visited the spot, said Shimu along with her brother had been bathing at a nearby pond around 3.00pm.

All of a sudden, they drowned. Later, their mother -- who had been searching for them -- found the bodies floating in the pond. Hearing her screams, her neighbours recovered the bodies. On information, police visited the spot.

An unnatural death case was lodged with the police station, said police.