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## **City solid waste generation doubles in 10 years**

*Brac University study reveals*

### FE Report

The solid waste generation in two city corporations of Dhaka has doubled over the past 10 years and the capacity of waste collection has also improved, a Brac University study revealed on Sunday.

The study said there is serious discrimination relating to waste management ward to ward and it depends on tax collection. The city has a serious landfill challenge as the capacity of the existing two landfills will exhaust by 2017 and no city corporation has any plan about that.

The findings were revealed during the launching of the research report titled 'State of Cities: Solid Waste Management in Dhaka City - Towards Decentralised Governance' at the city's Spectra Convention Centre. Brac Institute of Governance and Development (BIGD) of Brac University conducted the research.

Power and Participation Research Centre (PPRC) executive chairman Hossain Zillur Rahman was present as the chief guest while BIGD executive director Sultan Hafeez Rahman chaired the programme.

Lead researcher SM Gubair Bin Arafat presented the findings. The study was conducted in 600 households (HHs) of 12 out of the total 93 wards of Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC) and Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC) and six container sites.

The objectives of the research were to estimate the volume of solid waste generation in Dhaka city, the management issues in practice and identify the difficulty at various stages of solid waste management (SWM) etc.

In his presentation Mr Guabir said there was only one study on solid waste management of Dhaka city conducted by JICA (Japan International Cooperation Agency) in 2005. JICA found that a total of 3200 tonnes of waste were generated of which 1950 tonnes were from HHs while 1050 tonnes were from commercial or business entities and 200 tonnes from streets.

In 2015, the BIGD study found that the solid waste generation increased to 6110.47 tonnes of which 3070.71 tonnes are domestic, 1983.92 tonnes are from commercial/business organisations and 1055.83 tonnes from streets.

The city corporation collects 4643 tonnes of waste which is about 76 per cent, an increase from 43 per cent or 1400 tonnes in 2005. Per capita waste generation in 2015 is 0.38 kg which was 0.34 kg. JICA projected that the Dhaka city would generate 4624 tonnes of waste in 2015.

Major sources of waste generation are from vegetables and fruits, which are about 53 per cent of domestic waste. The season of waste generation is a matter of concern as 62 per cent of the surveyed HHs reported increase of waste during March-June period.

About 63 per cent HHs adopt the segregation process through multiple bins inside the house while about 70 HHs segregate waste before disposal. More than 80 per cent HHs enjoy door-to-door van collection services while 13 per cent HHs dispose of waste directly in open space.

The study showed that the wards which pay more get more facilities while the duties of corporation cleaners vary from ward to ward. The mechanism of control by the conservancy inspector is not clearly understood. Besides, there is coordination failure between the waste disposal and the collection at container stations.

In his comment Hossain Zillur Rahman said Bangladeshi cities are not clean and the country has a process of dirty development.

"The issue of SWM is at the heart. It is not a matter of aesthetics but it has a direct consequence for our health cause," he said.

The issue of SWM has to be understood in totality of a process, he said adding: without having the whole process in mind you cannot really think of how to address this challenge in a more effective manner.

He said there are governance, capacity, resource and behavioural issues along with the challenge of innovation.

"We have addressed one issue which is collection but separation and disposal remain as huge challenges," said the former caretaker government adviser.

Referring to a study of Wateraid, he said water has been polluted due to the disposal of the waste to the landfills at Matuail and Aminbazar which is an enormous challenge.

Relating to the decentralisation of governance, he said it is a very good agenda for local government.

Sultan Hafeez Rahman said rapid growth of population means more and more waste. Active ward commissioners have positive impacts on cleaning the wards. For Bangladesh landfill is going to be a serious problem and there is no clear-cut answer about the location, he added.

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