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**TOPIC:** The Ecosystem and Biome of My District- Dhaka

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Ecosystem means a biological community of interacting organisms and their physical environment. It is a geographic area where plants, animals, and other organisms, as well as weather and landscape, work together to form a bubble of life. Ecosystems may contain biotic or living, parts, as well as abiotic factors, or nonliving parts. On the other hand, biome is a bio-geographical unit consisting of a biological community that has formed in response to the physical environment in which they are found and a shared regional climate. A biome is an area classified according to the species that live in that location. Temperature range, soil type, and the amount of light and water are unique to a particular place and form the niches for specific species allowing scientists to define the biome. Biome may differ from place to place, depending on the geographical location. There are 4 biomes in Bangladesh such as Mangrove, Riparian, River Delta, Indo-Malaya Tropical Dry zone etc.

I am from Dhaka, and religiously, the district falls under tropical biome. Which means,  it has excellent for plant growth and soil development, plants grow thick and tall, found in areas near the equator, support more plant life and animal species than any other biome. Dhaka experiences a hot, wet and humid tropical climate**.**

Some observations, surveys, analyses, and evaluation revealed a diversity of urban ecosystems including canal, pond, wetland, cultivated land, rooftop garden, field, vacant plot, roadside trees, and graveyards. Important provisioning services included fruits, vegetables, fish, fodder, timber, and ornamental plants. Regulating services included carbon sequestration and particulate matter removal by park and roadside trees, drainage service by canals and wetlands, and noise abatement by parks. Opportunities for recreation, fishing and sports, walk/exercise, inspirations for art and culture and religious values presented cultural services. Habitat services for resident and migratory birds featured in parks, lakes, wetlands and trees on roadsides, playgrounds/fields, and graveyards.

Although the number of these facilities are very concerning. For example, there are some parks in here, but the number isn’t good enough for a city of this size. Also, they are only in some certain area so not all the people can enjoy the facilities. Again, due of population problem, city might not be able to provide all the people this facility and so rooftop gardens are a good alternative. Sadly, not all the buildings and apartments are open to this service either.

Also, for a long time, Dhaka has faced with many direct threats to biodiversity with accelerating economic development, growing population, land grabbing, congested housing, tree felling, and vehicles emitting toxic fumes leading to extreme pollution and poor quality of life. This is bad for the balance of biodiversity of the district and the result of it has already come to light. Many parks and playing fields have vanished. Just to cite some examples, the Anwara Udyan, Armanitola Playing field, Tikatuli Park and Azimpur Park have almost disappeared. Shaheed Park of Mohammadpur has been gulped as has the Uttara Park of Sector 1. Many like Nawabganj Park, Lalmatia New Colony Park on Iqbal Road are occupied, while Jatrabari Crossing Park is used for housing and garbage.  There is a park that still exists near my home, the Ramna Park. And while it fulfills all the qualities of an ideal park, it is not well-mentained for a very long time.

Few years ago, the North City Corporation (NCC) included cementing green spaces surrounding houses, offices and shops in Gulshan, Banani and other areas. Many old trees, beneficial to health and well-being, were cut. A once verdant green space is now hard concrete. Sewerage and road improvement has killed thousands of trees on road sides and islands. Cement in front of houses, banks and offices reflect heat and according to a WHO report, excessive heat cost the lives and health of almost half a million people in Dhaka city alone.

The good news is, concerned people here are trying their best to restore the ecosystem and biome of Dhaka. And even though the concerned problems are still at large, there has been some significant improvement. The government and city management are also trying to contribute to restore the ecosystem of the district. While this may be a very hard and long journey due to population and other problems that still exists, we might as well as be able to reach our goal.