



## Bangladesh Declares its Rivers Legal Persons

Bangladesh's High Court has granted the country's rivers the rights and status of "living entities" in a bid to save them from encroachment.

- The court has appointed the country's River Conservation Commission as the legal guardian of all waterways and directed other state agencies to fully assist it.
- Most of Bangladesh's rivers are branches and tributaries of two main Himalayan rivers — the Ganges and the Brahmaputra — which flow through Bangladesh before reaching the Bay of Bengal.
- The decision would save rivers from illegal encroachment in the densely populated country of 165 million people and where land is precious as gold.
  - Many of the country's rivers are struggling due to illegal sand dredging and large-scale industrial pollution.

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