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Bangladesh Declares its Rivers Legal Persons

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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.