

The Minamata Convention on Mercury intersessional work and submission of information on non-mercury alternative to dental amalgam for COP4.

Submitted by:

Environment and Social Development Organization-ESDO, Bangladesh

Bangladesh Dental Society-BDS Moving Forward to Phase Out Dental Amalgam Use by 2020. And Push for Ban Dental Amalgam

“Mercury amalgam threatens not only our lives, but also our environment. While many states have already disallowed amalgam, we, the people of Bangladesh are now ready to protecting our future and Environment, so the use of mercury in dental treatment has to be outlawed, right now,”
- Prof.Dr. Md. Abul Kashem, President, BDS.

Dhaka, 10 March 2018: “ Mercury dental amalgam should not be used in the treatment of pregnant women, nursing mothers and children after June 30, 2018” – The declaration came from the Bangladesh Dental Society (BDS) in association with Environment and Social Development Organization-ESDO through a press briefing. In the press briefing at Dhaka Reporters Unity, BDS Secretary General Prof. Dr. Humayun Kabir Bulbul officially announced this decision.

- In Bangladesh alternatives to mercury dental amalgam is GIC, and Composite has been already popular
- Available and affordable
- More than 75% dentist use Composite and
- The other is used both GIC & Composite in Bangladesh



Summery

Environment and Social Development Organization-ESDO involved in the ratification and implementation of the Minamata Convention on Mercury in Bangladesh since 2013, as part of the Minamata Convention on Mercury intersessional work and submission of information on non-mercury alternative to dental amalgam for COP4. ESDO compiled the data, including that related information on availability, economically feasible and benefits of non-mercury choices.

Non-mercury alternatives to dental amalgam benefit not only our environment by preventing dental mercury pollution, but also cut health risk and preserving tooth structure. In Bangladesh, non-mercury alternatives are available in both urban and rural regions. So Bangladesh Dental Society-BDS stopped using amalgam in children under 15, pregnant women, and lactating women from 30 June 2018. It further called for to stop using amalgam in dentistry. The goal is to end amalgam use in Bangladesh by 2020 and push forward to import ban on dental amalgam.

Using mercury in dental treatment is a menace to human health and the environment. Environment and Social Development Organization – ESDO has been conducting awareness raising efforts in a wide magnitude and involved in policy advocacy in this event since 2010. Since the inception of ESDO in 1990, it has been working to make a toxic free Bangladesh and a sustainable environmental livelihoods as well.

ESDO collaborated with the Bangladesh Dental Society – BDS with a view to phasing out the toxic mercury amalgam from the dental sector of the country. Meanwhile, the Bangladesh Army Dental Care is also working simultaneously to indicate their solidarity with this worldwide movement. This report incorporates data on the major achievements of Bangladesh as an innovator of some significant activities to commence. As a result, the path of banning mercury on Dentistry sector becoming very close due to the strong involvement of the Bangladesh Dental Society and Army Dental Core as well as the Ministry of Environment and Ministry of Health.

Later the long process this is a significant issue of the policy decision. A singular event that followed is that Bangladesh Army, NAVY and Air force has combined phase out dental amalgam in 2018. For modification in dental curriculum, the proposal has submitted, and five dental colleges have already revised and initiate this particularly adding a fresh chapter on alternative of dental amalgam theory and practical method. More than 90% registered dentists are Mercury Free in Bangladesh. A respectable bit of dental surgeons that is more than 4000 have self-declared Mercury Free Dentistry practitioners. In addition, more than 500 dental chambers or clinics in Dhaka city have recognized Mercury Free highest. ESDO is focused to phase out dental amalgam in Bangladesh and continuously playing on this publication to make the destination. Alternatives of mercury dental amalgam are GIC, and Composite has been already popular, available and affordable. More than 75% dentist use Composite and the rest are using both GIC in Bangladesh.

This story also helps as a source of information on the background movement of Mercury Free Dentistry in Bangladesh. Great progress has already been established in Bangladesh which is spotlighted here. The achievements are briefly identified in this story.

Background of Mercury Free Dentistry Movement

The mercury free dentistry movement arose the world. In Bangladesh, ESDO in collaboration with The World Alliance for Mercury-Free Dentistry has started in 2012. And Bangladesh Dental Society supports and join the movement in 2016. This joint effort set milestone and significant achievements.

Accomplishments at a glimpse:

- Bangladesh Army phased out the dental amalgam use in their treatment on January 10, 2018.
- The Bangladesh Dental Society declared to ban the usage of dental amalgam in the treatment of children and pregnant mothers in June 30, 2018.
- Six dental colleges /educational institutions declared mercury free.
- More than 4000 dental surgeons have self-declared Mercury Free Dentistry practitioners.
- A National coordination committee has established with the Bangladesh dental society, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change and Bangladesh Army and Environment and Social Development organization-ESDO to ban dental amalgam
- 500 private dental chambers have been recognized as mercury-free dental chamber
- A new draft curriculum has placed to adopt the alternative of mercury dental amalgam

Conclusion

All countries from developed to developing and under-develop into economic in-transition are faced with the usual challenge of supplying safe, quality and affordable wellness maintenance. With this, the priority of the dental care ignored by the developing and under developed countries.

Until now ESDO has achieved some major success in this respect, but we have to look forward further to complete phase out mercury from dental sectors. Some fruitful steps and opening moves can be evoked in this esteem. Immediate ratification of Minamata convention is needed. Combined with participation of Government and civil society can take a just resolution to make the goal of phasing out dental mercury amalgam.

As an environmental organization, ESDO focused its intervention on human health and the environment as a high priority area. It's gone on study findings hold, that mercury dental Amalgam is the reason of contamination of soil, water, and air. When the dental professionals are ready to phase out mercury dental amalgam and alternatives are proven as affordable, long-lasting and available, why we should wait for longer, this is the high time to phase out amalgam and protect human health and the environment.

We look frontward to working together in COP4 for an agreement to Phase Out Dental Amalgam as soon as possible.

Tuesday, June 30, 2020



Dentists not to use mercury in dental treatment

Staff Correspondent | Updated at 08:33pm on March 10, 2018



Speakers address a press briefing on Mercury-Free Dentistry in Bangladesh organised by Bangladesh Dental Society and Environment and Social Development Organization at Dhaka Reporters Unity on Saturday. — Press release

Dentists on Saturday declared to phase out mercury amalgam in dental treatment of pregnant women, mothers and children by June.

Bangladesh Dental Society made the announcement at a press conference at Dhaka Reporters' Unity. 'As mercury poses serious threat to health and environment, we are declaring not to use the element in dentistry', said BDS secretary general Humayun Kabir Bulbul while reading out the declaration. On behalf of the professional body, he urged all dentists across the country not to use mercury in dental treatment any more.

Though banned in many countries, mercury is still used in dental treatment, especially as dental amalgam, to fill tooth decay.

Amalgam fillings are a mixture of metals, consisting of liquid mercury and a powdered alloy composed of silver, tin, and copper.

Mercury is a known neurotoxin that can harm humans, especially children, pregnant women,



Bangladesh Dental Society–BDS

BDS Declaration

on

‘Stop Mercury Dental Amalgam for Pregnant Women, Nursing Mother and Children by June, 2018’

Mercury, used in dental amalgam as a filling material poses great threat to human health and environment. Campaign against mercury has become a global movement. The national professional body of the dental surgeons, Bangladesh Dental Society (BDS) is working promisingly since its formation to ensure proper and safer dental treatment in Bangladesh. Environment and Social Development Organization (ESDO) has been working on the global campaign ‘Mercury-Free Dentistry’ in Bangladesh since 2010 and the campaign expanded its magnitude after the official collaboration of ESDO and BDS in April of 2016 and still we are firmly working with a target to phase out mercury from dentistry in Bangladesh by 2018.

Mercury is a known neurotoxin that can cause harm to humans, especially children, pregnant women, nursing mother and fetuses. Furthermore, the use of dental amalgam results in substantial quantities of toxic mercury released annually into the environment. Once in the environment, mercury pollution damages animals, plants, and the entire ecosystem, while creating “hotspots that last for centuries.” Dental amalgam produces some waste products which severely affect our environment and ultimately human health. Amalgam fillings are a mixture of metals, consisting of liquid (elemental) mercury and a powdered alloy composed of silver, tin, and copper. Approximately 50% of dental amalgam is elemental mercury by weight.

Mercury vapors emit during food chewing and easily enter into the human body which causes neurological problems, skin cancer, kidney damages, disruption of reproductive system, oral cavity problems etc. Besides, unused amalgam released from dental clinics gets disposed as mercury waste which is a subsequent source of soil, water and air pollution.

If a childbearing woman or breastfeeding mother has silver filling in her teeth, the fetus will be exposed to mercury released from the filling throughout the gestation period as it passes via placenta into the fetus. This is very damaging to neurological development because fetus doesn't have a well-developed and effective blood brain barrier. Mercury also passes into breast milk and affects the nursing baby.

BDS have been working alongside ESDO to create mass awareness among the dental surgeons whereas already a good number of institutions (public/private dental college/dental unit) and dental surgeons phased out practicing mercury amalgam in dental treatment. As recognition of their efforts, we in collaboration with ESDO declared several dental colleges and hospitals as mercury amalgam –free. Also we have initiated recognizing mercury amalgam free dental chambers from this year. In addition, we are making efforts to revise BDS curriculum giving more emphasizes on the harmful effects of mercury amalgam.

Recently “European Union” agreed to enact a ban on dental amalgam fillings use in children under 15 years old and in pregnant and breastfeeding women which takes effect on July 1, 2018. Considering the importance of mercury-free dentistry especially for pregnant mother, nursing woman and children, we are declaring a ban on mercury amalgam for the treatment of pregnant mother, nursing woman and children by June, 2018 in Bangladesh. We are humbly requesting the distinguished members of the dental society to implement the ban all over Bangladesh.



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Bangladesh Dental Society–BDS

We are appealing to the government on prohibition on use and import of all mercury added products in Bangladesh. Government should come forward with a concrete regulation in this regard considering the welfare of human health and the environment especially being a signatory country of the Minamata Convention on mercury.

Prof. Dr. Md. Abul Kashem
President
BDS

Dr. Humayun Kabir Bulbul
Secretary General
BDS

* <http://www.dmdtoday.com/news/eu-bans-dental-amalgam-use-in-children-pregnant-and-breastfeeding-women>



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Annex-B

Source and News links:

The screenshot shows a web browser displaying the article on The Daily Star website. The URL in the address bar is <http://www.thedailystar.net/city/bds-esdo-demand-ban-mercury-dental-treatment-1546759>. The article is dated Tuesday, June 23, 2020. The main headline is "BDS, ESDO demand ban on mercury in dental treatment". Below the headline, it is noted as a "Staff Correspondent" piece. The text begins with "The government must formulate a policy to prohibit mercury use in dental treatment and import of all mercury-added products in Bangladesh, dentists have demanded." A "TOP NEWS" section is visible at the bottom right of the article content.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/city/bds-esdo-demand-ban-mercury-dental-treatment-1546759>

The screenshot shows a web browser displaying the article on NewAge Health website. The URL in the address bar is <http://www.newagebd.net/article/36453/dentists-not-to-use-mercury-in-dental-treatment>. The article is dated Tuesday, June 23, 2020. The main headline is "Dentists not to use mercury in dental treatment". Below the headline, it is noted as a "Staff Correspondent" piece. The text begins with "Dentists not to use mercury in dental treatment". A photograph shows a group of people seated at a table during a meeting or press conference. A banner in the background reads "DHAKA REPORTERS UNITY" and "Mercury Free Initiative in Bangladesh".

<https://www.newagebd.net/article/36453/dentists-not-to-use-mercury-in-dental-treatment>

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Address bar: risingbd.com/english/Stop-use-of-mercury-amalgam-in-dental-treatment-BDS/52285

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Stop use of mercury amalgam in dental treatment: BDS

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Amend regulations to stop mercury use in dental treatment: Speakers

Meha Deka
 27th May 2019 10:52:42



Environment Minister Anwar Hossain Mubtashir speaks at a discussion titled 'Threats and Dental Amalgam Use in Bangladesh & Regulation for their' at Kazi Nazimuddin Bangladesh Press in Dhaka on Monday. - SUN (PHOTO)

Speakers at Sunday urged the government to

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