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Worn wall due to the water leakage

Water Leaks and Rising Health Risks: Inside the Crisis at the Global Campus Central Library

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The Global Campus Central Library is currently facing severe water leakage in its reading room. This not only causes inconvenience for users but also raises potential health risks due to mold. Since the library is only taking temporary measures, the introduction of a fundamental solution has become increasingly urgent.

Severe Water Leakage in the Library—the Old Problem Persists

The reading room of the library, located on the first basement floor of the building, is struggling with a severe water leakage problem. Water drips continuously from the ceiling, and the wall paint has peeled off due to humidity. Even though parts of the ceiling were replaced with iron panels to prevent leakage, water still drips through small cracks on the metal surface.

The problem is even more severe in the area beneath the first-floor entrance, which is constructed with limestone. As the limestone material has been exposed to continuous water leakage, the mixture of water and impurities has caused sludge to accumulate. In some parts of the area, small stalactite-like formations have even developed.

This structural vulnerability

is directly linked to the worsening condition. Seo Su-hwan, the library manager, added that the limestone material has been one of the main causes of the worsening problem. “This is the main reason the water leakage issue keeps getting worse. As the sludge blocks the water pipes, leaks can potentially occur in unexpected places,” he explained.

The water leakage problem is not a recent issue. Seo explained that it has persisted since the building first opened in 1995. Although several repair works have been carried out over the years, the issue has never been fully resolved.

Potential Damage and Health Risks Urge Immediate Action

The ongoing leakage problem threatens to damage the library’s collection. The library student worker, Kim Dae-hyeon, added, “We cannot let our guard down even on ordinary

days. Even when it is not raining, the books can get wet due to humidity, so we have to manage them continuously.”

The water leakage also causes inconvenience for users. Kim explained, “Usually, we use a water suction machine to remove leaked water. Sometimes, we need to turn it on during the daytime when the leakage is severe,” he added, “due to the noise, some people leave the reading room.”

Health issues due to growing mold are one of the most serious concerns. Seo stated, “The most worried part is the health risk. In some areas, mold has grown severely, and the air feels completely different from the outside. If germs enter our bodies, they could potentially cause respiratory diseases.”

The on-site investigation clearly revealed the health risks. In the area where the preservation archives are stored, the air quality differs significantly from other indoor areas. Moreover, student work-

ers are stationed right in front of this area, exposing them to the potential health hazards that Seo mentioned.

Only Temporary Measures in Place, Urging a Fundamental Solution

Despite these growing risks, the library relies on temporary measures rather than long-term solutions. While the problem remains unresolved, the library has yet to provide a fundamental solution. To prevent water leakage from the ceiling, the library replaced the iron panels in several affected areas. However, cracks have appeared around the replaced panels, allowing the water leakage to continue.

In the areas with a normal ceiling, only temporary measures remain in place. Buckets have been placed throughout the area to collect the leaking water. Meanwhile, in the preservation archive—where the leakage is more severe than in other sections—a large vinyl sheet has been installed to gather the water and drain it all at once.

The library also has no definitive solution to the sludge problem. Seo explained, “The sludge, which has been worsened in recent years, is removed through maintenance work every one or two years. However, since the problem persists, we often have to remove it ourselves on a regular basis.”

Overall, regarding these measures, Seo added that they are merely temporary and emphasized the need for a fundamental solution. “Although we have

carried out maintenance work to prevent water leakage, it still has not worked. The measures we are taking are only short-term fixes, and a fundamental solution must be found,” he said.

Points to Look at: the Maintenance Plans

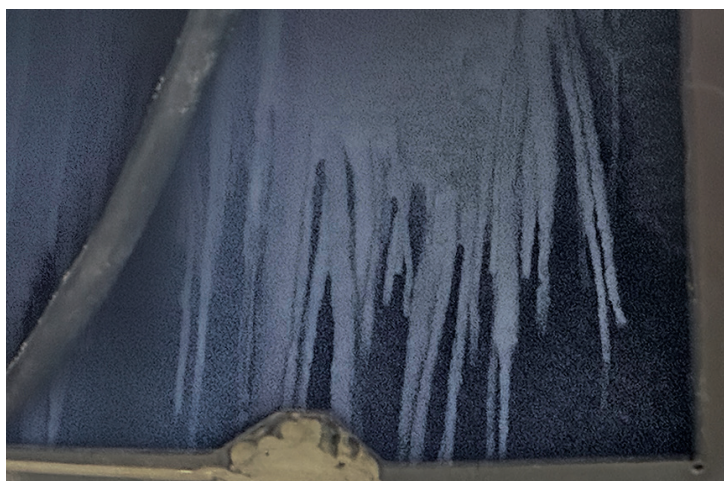
A potential turning point is the upcoming maintenance project. According to Seo, the University’s Facility Management Team (FMT) is planning a water leakage repair and is currently reviewing cost estimates for the work. The team mentioned that it will complete the cost estimate and begin the repair work as soon as possible.

Although a repair plan is under review, crucial details remain unclear. The FMT stated, “We do not know when the repair will be carried out. Since a specialized company must be in charge of the construction, we are unable to answer questions regarding the schedule, cost, or the construction process.”

The repair is expected to be completed by next year. Seo mentioned that the library is currently implementing a three-year remodeling plan, which is scheduled to be completed in 2026. “If the remodeled space is to satisfy users, the water leakage repair must be completed before the next remodeling phase, or carried out together with it,” he added.

Unfortunately, regarding the repair, the FMT also expressed a negative outlook. “The building itself is an expanded structure. Even after the repair is conducted, it is uncertain whether the leakage issue will be completely resolved,” the team said, indicating that continuous attention to the leakage issue will be necessary.

While the Global Campus Central Library has long struggled with water leakage issues, reliance on temporary measures continues. Even though the library has carried out several repairs and is now planning another, the problem appears to remain unresolved. Given the risks to both student health and the library’s collections, the a long-term solution should seriously be considered.



A group of stalactites in the Global Campus Central Library