

## Fisheries on the decline

### Deterioration of aquatic environment and overfishing blamed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The inland and marine capture fisheries are declining rapidly because of deterioration of aquatic environment and overfishing, experts said at a conference yesterday.

Calling for more research to increase the production of fish, they said national research institutions, universities and relevant agencies can also play a vital role in this regard.

Bangladesh Fisheries Research Forum (BFRF) organised the two-day Second Fisheries Conference and Research Fair-2006 at the auditorium of the Bangladesh Agricultural Research Council at Farmgate in the city.

Fisheries and Livestock Minister Abdullah Al Noman

inaugurated the conference attended by representatives from different organisations fisheries departments of universities and development agencies.

"Although we do not have adequate research in the fisheries sector, the production of fish in our country in the last two decades is higher than that of the two neighbouring countries," said the minister at the inaugural session of the conference.

Prof Dr M Asaduzzaman, chairman of University Grants Commission, said the fisheries sector provides over 60 per cent of protein nutrition as Bangladesh is blessed with a vast aquatic resources and offers suitable climatic condition for growing fish.

"The total fish production in the country is 2.10 million metric tons

and marine fisheries accounts for around 21.66 per cent of the total," said Dr Gias Khan, deputy director general of Department of Fisheries, in his keynote paper on 'Coastal & Marine Fisheries of Bangladesh Status and Potentials'.

He also said that 92.7 percent of marine catches are landed by artisanal fishers who employ smaller and less efficient fishing boats.

Around 22,500 non-mechanised and 21,400 mechanised fishing boats are engaged in catching marine fishes, he added.

Bangladesh Fisheries Research Forum President Dr Abdul Wahab, General Secretary Dr Khair Ahmed and Coordinator Dr Akhteruzzaman also spoke at the inaugural session.

## Nirmul Committee founding anniversary today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Ekatturer Ghatak Dalal Nirmul Committee will observe its 14th founding anniversary today.

On this day in 1992, Jahanara Imam formed the 101-member Nirmul Committee and launched a movement against the 1971 war criminals and against communal politics.

The need for such movement is also essential now as the country has been undergoing bomb attacks by Jamaat and its militant associates, a press release of the Committee said yesterday.

On the occasion, Nirmul Committee will place wreaths on the grave of Jahanara Imam, known as Shaheed Janani, at Mirpur in the city this morning.

In the afternoon, it will arrange a discussion meeting and exhibition of its publications at the Jatiya Press Club. Prof Kabir Chowdhury will preside over the meeting, while writer-journalist Shahriar Kabir will deliver the introductory speech.

Among others, politicians Abdur Razzak, MP, Rashed Khan Menon, Manzurul Ahsan Khan and Hasanul Haq Inu, indigenous peoples' leader Promod Mankin, MP, singer Kalim Sharaifi, right activist Ajoy Roy and vice-president of the committee Shyamoli Nasrin Chowdhury are expected to address the discussion meeting.

The committee asked all to attend the occasion.

## 'Cancel appointments of new election commissioners'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Terminating the Election Commission (EC) 'a loyal body of the prime minister', Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) yesterday demanded immediate cancellation of the appointments of two new election commissioners and resignation of the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) in order to hold a free and fair election in the country.

The BCL student front of the main opposition Awami League, described the appointments of the two commissioners 'extra-constitutional and politically motivated'.

"We all want fair elections because BNP stands a better chance of winning the elections if there is a fair vote," he said.

About BNP nominations, he said everybody will have to work for those candidates who will be nominated by chairperson Khaleda Zia.

Referring to a demand by the opposition on reforms of the Election Commission, he said the opposition does not know what they want. "If there has to be any reform in Bangladesh, BNP has to be consulted."

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Labour Forum on WTO Bangladesh stages a demonstration at Muktangan in the city yesterday demanding release of all detainees arrested during the WTO Ministerial in Hong Kong.

PHOTO: STAR

## AL plan is to foil election

### Bhuiyan tells Jubo Dal meet

UNB, Dhaka

BNP Secretary General and LGRD Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan yesterday said Awami League's ultimate plan is to foil the upcoming general election as they do not stand any chance of winning the polls.

"The main objective of Awami League is to foil the elections, therefore, they are making various excuses," he said while he was inaugurating an extended meeting of Jatiyatabadi Jubo Dal at the Institute of Diploma Engineers.

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Bhuiyan said, "Within next few

months we will hand over the power to a caretaker government and take part in the elections. In the next elections we will have to give people the accounts of what we have done during our tenure."

"We will have to wage a counter campaign against the canards that BNP did not do anything for the country," he told the youth leaders.

He said he is afraid of the fact that newspapers are writing against the BNP government, but "the truth will prevail."

"We are still in power after 15 years of negative campaign against us," he said, adding "We have to keep faith in people."

About price hike of essentials, he said it is always a temporary phenomenon. The price depends on many factors for which the government has not much to do.

He, however, said, "We will have to keep constant watch if prices of essentials are increased through syndication, and actions will have to be taken against that."

About allegation that the government is carrying out the bombings, Bhuiyan said, "Even a mad does not burn his one house."

"Those who are saying this lost their credibility," he said.

Terminating the bombings a national problem, he said despite non-cooperation from the opposition, the government continues to arrest the bombers. "They will be handed down exemplary punishment."

On the opposition demand for resignation of the government, he said, "Will the BNP having 200 seats to its credit resign on the demand of a party with 58 seats?"

Giving a damn to the opposition's threat of movement, he said it will have no efficacy. "We waged movement against Ershad and the last government. We are not scared of the threat of movement."

About the reform in caretaker government, Bhuiyan said if Zillur Rahman or Tofail Ahmed is made the chief of caretaker government, the opposition will not accept it.

Works Minister Mirza Abbas, Gayeswar Chandra Roy and Syed Moazzem Hossain Alal MP also spoke at the with Jubo Dal President Barkatullah Bha in the chair.

## Two cops get three years in robbery case

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A Chittagong court yesterday sentenced two policemen to three years' rigorous imprisonment in a robbery case.

The court also fined the convicts -- constables Bashir Ahmad, 25, son of Abdul Mannan, and Shahidur Rahman, 30, son of Azgar Ali Molla, - Tk 3,000 each. If they fail to pay, they will have to suffer another three months' imprisonment.

Magistrate Ekram Hossain of the Speedy Trial Court handed down the verdict.

According to the prosecution, the two constables of Madunaghat outpost under Hathazari Police Station along with 14 other robbers in three CNG auto-rickshaws intercepted the vehicle of Anwar Hossain, a salesman of Ibne Sina Pharmaceuticals, at Kaptai Raster Matha in Dhup Pole area at around 9:00pm on September 14 last year.

They tried to loot the money the salesman had collected from different medicine stores in Kaptai area, but a team of patrol police with the help of local people managed to catch the two cops while the others escaped.

Ibne Sina Chittagong Area Manager Md Didarul Alam filed a case with Chandgaon Police Station in this connection.

The court gave the verdict after examining six prosecution witnesses.

Advocate Sadhanmoi Bhattacharya and Advocate Alamgir Mohammad Yunus appeared for the plaintiff while Advocate Swabhu Prasad and Advocate Premangkur Barua defended the accused.

## 50 shops gutted in Chittagong

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

At least 50 shops and valuables worth over Tk 30 lakh were gutted in a devastating fire at Patenga sea beach area of the port city yesterday.

According to witnesses, the fire originated from electric short-circuit at a cosmetic shop at around 5:50am and soon engulfed other shops, mostly of garments products, cosmetics, shawls and shoes.

Two fire fighting units from the EPZ Fire Station rushed to the spot and extinguished the blaze.

Fire service sources estimated the loss at Tk 30 lakh.

Meanwhile, in another incident, four shanties of a slum at city's Ambagan area were devastated at 8:20am yesterday.

The loss of property in the fire originated from kitchen-oven was estimated at Tk 30 thousand, sources said.

## One killed in Jessore road accident

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jessore

One person was killed in a road accident at Monoharpur on the Jessore-Magura road yesterday.

The victim was identified as Khandkar Abu Hashem, 55, of Panchbaria village under Sadar upazila and a peon of Ichhal Union Land Office under sadar upazila in Jessore.

A speeding truck from opposite direction ran over Hashem at Monoharpur Bazar when he was going to his office riding a bicycle in the morning, police said.

He was rushed to the Jessore General Hospital in a critical condition where he succumbed to his injuries at about 10:00am.



Bangladesh Supreme Court Bar Association held a meeting at the Bar Association Hall in the city yesterday protesting 'politicisation' of the Election Commission.

PHOTO: STAR

## Strict enforcement of ban on polybags demanded

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Environmentalists yesterday called on the government to strictly enforce the law banning the polythene shopping bag and to control the use of disposable plastic products.

Although the law was enacted in 2002, its copies are yet to reach the authorities responsible for its implementation, they said at a press conference.

Even there is no monitoring system under the environment directorate to effectively enforce the law, they added.

Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon (Bapa), a non-government environmental organisation, organised the news conference at the National Press Club in the city.

Criticising the government's recent decision to allow a company to produce polythene products for

export, Prof Dr Bazul Haque Khondaker said, "Such a move will encourage the use of polythene products in the country instead of stopping its use."

Recently, there is a growing trend of using disposable plastic products such as plastic water bottles and disposable plates and spoons, which also causes damage to the environment like polythene

bags, he said.

The environmentalists also urged the government to close down all polybag-making factories and remove all such bags from the markets.

Kazi Mohammad Shish, former chief engineer of Dhaka Wasa, Dr Abdul Matin, joint general secretary of Bapa, and Amit Ranjan Dey also spoke at the press conference.



## Light rain likely

UNB, Dhaka

Weather may remain mainly dry with partly cloudy sky over the country having chances of light rain/drizzle at one or two places over Dhaka, Rajshahi and Sylhet divisions in the next 12 hours till 6:00pm today.

Moderate to thick fog may also occur during late night till morning over the country, Met Office said, predicting nearly unchanged night temperature.

Highest temperature 31.5 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Patuakhali and lowest 10.8 degree at Syedpur.

The sun sets in the capital at 5:35pm today and rises at 6:43am tomorrow.

Highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

City/Town	Temperature in Celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	Max	Min	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	25.8	14.8	88	79
Chittagong	28.0	16.0	71	80
Rajshahi	27.8	12.1	96	67
Khulna	30.2	15.0	100	66
Barisal	29.6	14.0	100	75
Sylhet	24.0	13.4	90	80
Cox's Bazar	27.8	17.2	84	84

## DU exams postponed

DU CORRESPONDENT

The Dhaka University authorities postponed all the examinations scheduled for January 22 due to unavoidable reason.

Fresh dates for the postponed exams would be announced soon, says a press release.

## Dam receives National Book Centre Award

Dhaka Ahsania Mission (Dam) received the National Book Centre Award-2004 for its publication titled "Hans Chhana Pank Pank"- a book of rhyme for the young children, says a press release.

Information Minister M Shamsul Islam yesterday handed over the award, which included a citation and a cheque of Tk 10 thousand to M Ehsanur Rahman, deputy executive director of Dam in the concluding ceremony of the 12th Dhaka Book Fair on the Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy premises in the city.

The 16-page book of rhyme in four colours deals with common birds and nature of Bangladesh that will attract the children and inculcate patriotism in their young minds.

Shahidullah Sharif developed the book as part of a series of materials for young children following the guidelines of Training and Materials Development Division of Dam. MA Mannan has illustrated the book and designed the cover.



M Ehsanur Rahman, deputy executive director of Dhaka Ahsania Mission, receives the National Book Centre Award-2004 from Information Minister M Shamsul Islam at the Shilpakala Academy in the city yesterday.

President Iajuddin Ahmed and Prime Minister Khaleda Zia greeted the Tanzanian President on his assumption of office as the President of Tanzania.

In a message to Tanzanian President Jakaya Kikwete President Iajuddin said, "I am confident that the existing excellent bilateral relations between our two countries will further be strengthened and consolidated in all affairs of cooperation under your brotherly people of the Tanzania."

In a separate message to the Tanzanian President Khaleda expressed confidence that the bilateral ties that exists so happily between the two countries will witness further progress and achievements in all avenues of cooperation under his able leadership to the mutual benefit of our two people.

Both the President and the Prime Minister wished sound health, happiness and long life of the Tanzanian President and further peace progress and prosperity to the brotherly people of Tanzania.

## Farmer killed by stepbrothers in Khulna

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

A farmer was hacked to death by his stepbrothers at Adampur village under Terokhada upazila of Khulna district yesterday.

The victim was identified as Moka Fakir, 55.

Moka Fakir was murdered during a quarrel over harvesting of paddy in the same village, police said.

Lekjan Fakir, 46, wife of slain Moka Fakir, was also severely injured during the clash. She is undergoing treatment at the Khulna Medical College Hospital (KMCH).

Police said Khoka Fakir, Imran Fakir and Nazrul Fakir are stepbrothers of Moka Fakir. They left the spot immediately after the murder.

## Blue for Peace

Family of slain former finance minister Shah AMS Kibria will stage a silent sit-in as part of their Blue for Peace Programme demanding trial of the killers of former minister. Venue: Opposite to Russell Square. Time: 4:00pm.

## Workshop

Bangladesh Dalits Human Rights organises a three-day training workshop on human rights and leadership development. Venue: Secretariat, Nagorik Uddog, Lalmitia.

## Baul music

Tarikat-E-Ahle Bayat Bangladesh organises a National Baul Music Festival. Venue: Central Shaheed Minar. Time: 3:00pm.

## Discussion

Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy

organises a discussion and cultural function to mark the 70th birth anniversary of late President Ziaur Rahman. Venue: Academy Chitrashala Plaza. Time: 4:00pm.