

Serious crisis of tiger shrimp fry prevailing in Khulna region

From Abu Ahmed

SATKHIRA, July 30: The area of cultivable land used for shrimp cultivation is increasing every year. The greater Khulna district, the south western region of the country is the Gangetic delta. Due to construction of Farakka Barrage flow of water in upstream rivers have slowed down, giving rise to salinity further down stream. This situation has attracted many entrepreneurs to start shrimp cultivation. A huge amount of money is invested in Shrimp culture. Government is supporting the Shrimp cultivation. But a very alarming situation has arisen in production of shrimp in the Khulna region. It is apprehended that the shrimp culture will be limited to half of the total area of the normal shrimp cultivation during the current season. The season has already started but fry of the tiger shrimp is reportedly not available to owner's of shrimp enclosures in the entire Khulna region. This unprecedented situation has been created out of excessive catching of fry and that too in an unplanned manner by fishermen in the

Bay of Bengal and the adjacent Sundarban areas as well as in other coastal belt of the country for the last one decade. There are about one lakh hectares of land in greater Khulna district for the production of tiger shrimp. It is feared that the cultivation of shrimp may be possible on about half of the actual area because of the scarcity of fry prevalent in the southern area along the coastal belt and once again these fry after their full growth or so return to the sea. Some of these fry come floating from the sea to the rivers of the coastal belt areas. Catching of these fry go unabated. When contacted, a few owners of shrimp enclosures of the region told The Daily Star that these tiger shrimp fry are being sold at present at Taka 2500 to Taka 3500 for every thousand. Small owners of shrimp enclosures are facing tough time to release fry. It is interesting to note that this year saline water has been irrigated in thousands of bighas of land with a hope of handsome profit from the export of tiger shrimp.

Area of land used for shrimp cultivation is increasing every year. In 1995, a total of 25,974 hectares of land have been freshly transformed in to shrimp cultivation. In 1994 total land under shrimp cultivation was 73,521 hectares in greater Khulna district. The area increased to 99,495 hectares in 1995 as per statistics available from district fisheries office. It means, every year, land so long used for paddy cultivation was being changed to shrimp cultivation. The landless farmers (having a maximum of 50 decimal of land) engaged previously in agro-based activities, now have no daily work. Not only that, they have also lost their homestead garden, trees, cattle, milch cows and sweet water. Big ponds are the main source of the drinking water in coastal areas. Economic experts say, the total earning is going to entrepreneurs but landless people, marginal farmers and small farmers are losing their jobs and also their agro-based social system and earning pattern.

Timber worth Tk 1 lakh seized in CHT

From CHT Correspondent BAGHAICHHARI (Rangamati), July 30: After an exchange of fire for about half an hour with the tribal insurgents, the security forces have here recovered valuable species of timber loaded on two boats worth over Taka one lakh on Tuesday last, illegally extracted from the government reserved forest, officials said. The tribal insurgents opened fire when they were asked to stop by the security forces while they were escorting two boats loaded with timbers in the Kachalong valley, between Baghaichhari and Marishya. The security forces responded with fire which lasted for about half an hour till the insurgents managed to flee abandoning the boats, sources said.

In addition to pilferage of forest produce, the tribal insurgents have been extorting tolls from the extractors and people working in the inaccessible areas of hill tracts region creating unrest and continuing roadblock, an official from Forest Department said.

Armed tribals kidnap UP chairman

From CHT Correspondent ROANGCHHARI (Bandarban), July 30: A gang of armed tribal insurgents numbering about ten have here kidnapped Kyashai Thoi, Chairman of Roangchhari union parishad in Roangchhari thana of the district in the early hours of Thursday from his residence at thana headquarters at gunpoint, police said quoting the eye-witnesses as saying. The kidnapers have also taken away the licenced gun of the abducted chairman from his residence. The militant tribal insurgents left a note demanding Taka three lakh as ransom for release of traditional tribal leader, Chairman Kyashai Thoi while leaving for their abode in the deep jungle after the operation, sources added.

A tense situation has developed after the abduction in the area and the people have been bitterly condemning the activities being carried out by the tribal insurgents adverse to the on-going dialogue to find out a lasting solution of the CHT problem between the government and Parbatya Chattagram Gono Sanghati Samity, the parent organisation of the insurgents, better known as Shantibahini.

4 tribal insurgents held while collecting toll

From CHT Correspondent BAGHAICHHARI (Rangamati), July 30: The security forces have here rounded up from tribal insurgents while extorting tolls from the local people and recovered cash as well as insurgency-related documents from their possessions, police said. The arrested insurgents were Pradip Chakma alias Lt. Somen, Subash Chakma, Provakaran Chakma and Shushil Kanu Chakma.

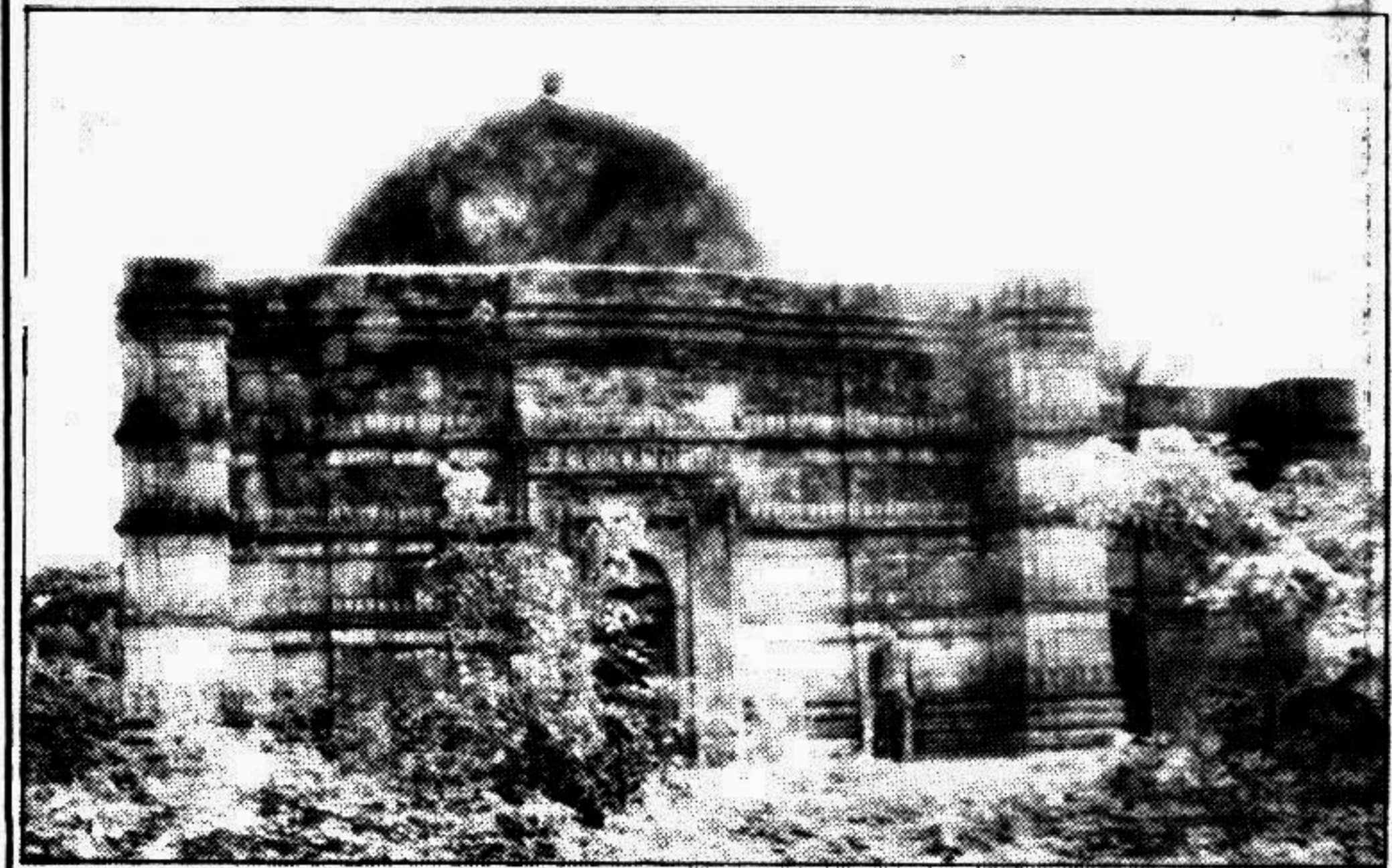
Besides, money receipts for extortion of tolls on currents and outstanding collection, a circular mentioning the names of the defaulters in making payment to the insurgents with direction for next course of action which were duly inscribed with the monogram of Parbatya Chattagram Jono Sanghati Samity, the security forces recovered Taka 58,943 and Rupees 4,220 (Indian) in cash. After surrender of Rear Babu, one of the commanders of the tribal insurgents to the security forces, Pradip, the self-styled Lieutenant, taking Lt. Somen as organizational code name was carrying out atrocities and subversive activities at Kachalong and Machalong areas of Baghaichhari thana in the district, the sources said quoted Lt. Somen as confessing.

Mother with 3 children drown

NARSINGDI, July 30: A woman and her three children drowned when an engine boat capsized at Dhampur beel in sadar thana on Saturday, reports UNB. The victims were identified as Taherunnessa, 45, wife of Arju Miah of Chadpur village in Aratshah thana and her two sons Jahangir, 9 and Alamgir, and Daughter Shahnaaj, 5.

Parobarpur Mosque, a 300 years old architectural milestone

From Our Correspondent



The Parobarpur Mosque in Kaliganj thana of Satkhira district. Star photo by Abu Ahmed

SATKHIRA, July 30: For long the three centuries old historical Parobarpur Mosque still stands as a historic symbol in the district. King Pratapaditya's Pathan army chief, Subedar Parobar Khan built this Mosque for saying prayers with the Muslim soldiers and it was named Parobarpur Mosque after his name. According to historians, Dhulihar Pargana (now under Kaliganj thana of Satkhira district) including eastern areas of the Indian river, Hoogly was under Muslim rule during 15th century. Due to lack of care for long this historical Mosque fell under attack of growth of the bush. Beasts made their shelter there and hundreds of trees, also grew. In 1965, the pious fellow Alhaj Sohrab Ali of village Mukundapur under Kaliganj thana of the district renovated the Mosque making it suitable for prayers. The Area outside the Mosque measures 52'5"x39'8" while the inside it measures 21'6"x21'6". The ten doored Mosque has one tomb (gambos) while there are three more tombs in its verandah. The walls are 5'-9" to 7'-0". There are three or-namented Mehrras on the

western wall inside the mosque. Besides there are attractive ornamentalations in a shape of flags at the junction of the Falies of the outer lines of each Mehrrar. The khulan of the Mehrras are joined with many Falies. In one spandrel there are two bloomed lily flower Buties and beautiful creeps designs are found at the end of the frame. According to historians, this Mosque has an architectural similarity with Atia Mosque of Tangail established in 1608. The Shahi Mosque of Narayanganj, Chamkati Mosque of West Bengal, India and Loton Mosque are comparable to this Mosque, as well. According to Persian Parwana Mughal Fauzdar Nurullah Khan who was a close relative of Emperor Aurangzeb appointed Syed Kashim of village Parbazpur as caretaker for the Mosque and, donated a plot of 50 bighas of land. History says, one of the Bengal Awlias Hafez Maulana Abu Jafar Muhammad Alamgir Aurangzeb with a hope to avail heaven ordered Subedar Parobar Khan to build this Mosque for saying prayers in

the area. In 1938, Bengal Wakf Commissioner declared the Mosque as Wakf property and named it 'Nurullah Khan Wakf Estate'. In course of time the three gambos of the verandah of the Mosque covered with bushes were ruined. Two pillars were also damaged much later. Department of Architecture took this Mosque and spent a sum of Taka ten lakh for the reconstruction of the ancient Mosque, made of Terakata bricks. In course of time, the adjacent Mosque with its surrounding property have been brought under dispute. Allegations say that the then British government's Nayeib Karkoon Kazi Noor Muhammad took this property from the Mosque Sebait and made a Kobala deed after his wife's name, Musammatt Azmatunnessa. The Mosque and the property was recorded in her name in 1942. The members of the family of Syed Kashim claim the Mosque as their family property. Meanwhile, 50 bighas of land has been grasped by then government and only three acres of land is now under possession of the Mosque.

Bravo!

From Our Correspondent JHENIDAH, July 30: A police constable foiled a bus dacoity attempt and was able to arrest five dacoits. According to police sources, some armed dacoits travelling in the guise of passengers on a Dhaka-bound coach of Ananda Paribahan took control of the bus when the coach reached near Churamankati bazar and started looting the passengers. A police constable Mashiar Rahman who was also travelling in that coach took risk of his life and attacked the dacoits with a Boti and injured all the five dacoits. The miscreants also attacked the police constable Mashiar and four others. A police van later reached the spot and nabbed the miscreants red-handed, police sources said.



SYLHET: MA Razzaque Chowdhury, president, Sylhet Chamber of Commerce & Industries speaking at a discussion meeting on fish export held in Sylhet recently. — Star photo

Immediate shifting of Nagarbari ferry ghat demanded

PABNA, July 30: The shifting of Nagarbari ferry ghat has become essential to ensure smooth communication with the Northern region. The issue has been raised before authorities concerned at different levels as well as to peoples representatives. Different issues have made the shifting bare necessity. The ten nautical mile distance between Aricha and Nagarbari ghat bears responsibility for the long period (about two and half hours) in crossing the river. The navigability of the river does not remain static at Nagarbari point due to rise of numerous chars. This has made river crossing highly hazardous, especially during the dry seasons. Meanwhile due to silting, river-bed near Nagarbari ghat has risen, resulting in drastic fall in water level. The water vessels have to ply along the narrow channels among the chars.

Although dredging has become urgent, it is at the same time highly costly. Frequent erosion also make dredging ineffective. Rather, Natibpur a point further down stream may accommodate a new ghat. Meanwhile, a vested quarter, local beneficiaries and powerful Ujaradars are lobbying hard to cancel the shifting of the ghat, it was reported. Experts, when contacted told this correspondent that Natibpur has several advantages for setting up of a ferry ghat. At Natibpur point the nautical distance with Aricha will be only three miles. It would take less than an hour to cross the river at this point. Another advantage will be that chars are not likely to emerge at Natibpur-Aricha crossing in 10 to 15 years, and erosion is not evident at this point. Meanwhile the government has decided to shift the

ghat to Natabari. Ashiqul Haque Chowdhury, DC Pabna disclosed this information to this correspondent. He said works on constructing a new ghat at Natabari would begin in three months time. The shifting of Nagarbari ghat to Natabari would not however, solve the problems currently faced at Nagarbari while crores of taka will be spent, it is alleged. When asked, TNO of Bera, within which both Nagarbari and Natabari falls stated that the shifting would not improve the situation. Meanwhile, leaders of Bangladesh Sarak Paribahan Sramik Federation in a press conference recently have demanded the shifting of the ghat to Natibpur. They said otherwise they will go for movements. Different political parties have also demanded the shifting of the ghat to Natibpur.

Monk kidnaps schoolgirl!

COX'S BAZAR, July 30: A Buddhist monk has allegedly kidnapped a schoolgirl from Ramu thana, reports UNB. Police said Daisy Prova Barua, a student of Class Seven of Ramu Girls' High School, was kidnapped on Tuesday by U Yan Lika alias Lethi Mong Marma, 30, of Fariakul Buddhist monastery. Father of Daisy, Shankar Barua, filed a case with Ramu thana on Wednesday. Police today arrested three people, including a girl, from Ukhia bus stand in connection with the kidnapping. They are Lilina Barua, Kheturai Marma and Chaimong Marma. They confessed to the police that they were involved in the abduction. However, police could not yet trace the girl and the monk.

ADB mission chief visits LGED projects

From Our Correspondent JHENIDAH, July 30: Asian Development Bank (ADB) mission chief, Kubayashi has expressed his satisfaction over the performances of Local Government Engineering Department (LGED), Jhenidah while visiting some construction sites of the department recently, it is learnt. LGED sources said that they have innovated cost-effective stone & brick crushing machine locally invented by engineers of LGED, Jhenidah. He informed that a stone & brick crushing machine built by LGED costs only Taka 50,000 which can crush at least 400 cubic feet of stone or brick a day. But the same machine if imported would cost at least Taka 5,50,000. He informed that the locally manufactured stone crusher might save foreign currencies worth Taka several crore. Hassan also informed that they had also manufactured a ramp locally which is used for loading and unloading of road rollers. It also serves the purpose of cleaning and washing of rollers and all types of vehicles. During the visit the ADB mission chief also saw some of the cost-effective road construction sites and talked to the members of Labour Contracting Society (LCS).



JHENIDAH: Asian Development Bank (ADB) Mission Chief Kubayashi visiting stone & brick crushing machine locally invented by engineers of LGED, Jhenidah. — Star photo



JHENIDAH: ADB Mission Chief Kubayashi visiting a laboratory of LGED at Jhenidah. — Star photo

A new species of rice invented

MYMENSINGH, July 30: "Binasail", a new species of rice invented by Bangladesh Institute of Nuclear Agriculture (BINA) is more profitable and can be produced in flood-hit agricultural lands, says an UNB report. The species has been developed from local 'variety Naizarsail' that ripens two to four weeks earlier than other species and produces 20 per cent more paddy, said a BINA press release. A recent survey revealed that in per hectare of land, 4.20 ton to five tons of paddy can be produced by cultivating Binasail and 3.20 tons to 4 tons agricultural land in flood-hit areas. Seed-bed of the paddy should be completed by Srabon of Bangla month and planting of paddy in the first week of Ashhin of Bangla month. Meanwhile, BINA has arranged 320 demonstration plots in 150 thanas of 45 districts with the assistance of Agricultural Extension Departments and Bangladesh Agricultural University to popularise the Binasail cultivation. Scientific Officers (Information) Md Niaz Uddin Pasha in the press release said, the farmers will get double profit than that of the local variety if the species could be popularised by arranging motivation programme.



RAJSHAHI UNIVERSITY: A member of Suchana Shahittaya Parishad presenting a poster on Liberation War to prof Hasan Azizul Haq, a prominent author of prose fiction at a prize giving ceremony of Shahittaya Parishad recently. — Star photo

Kushtia-Rajbari road link restored

From Our Correspondent KUSHTIA, July 30: With the resumption of ferry service over river Goral near Goral Railway Bridge, road communication between Kushtia and Rajbari has been restored and distance between Kushtia and the capital has been reduced as well as the sufferings of the travelling people came to an end. Goral river lost its navigation due to unilateral withdrawal of Ganges water by India through Farakka Barrage constructed on the other part of the border. As a result, river communication remain suspended during lean period and people crossed the river walking. Meanwhile, construction of Kushtia-Rajbari road has been completed and Roads & Highway department constructed a Belly Bridge over the river Goral facilitating easy plying of buses and trucks during lean period. With the construction of this road, distance between Kushtia and Daulatdia ghat has been reduced from one hundred miles to only 55 miles. A private car driver told this correspondent that with the opening of Kushtia-Rajbari road distance between Kushtia and Dhaka has become only 110 miles instead of 155 miles and only 12 litre petrol is needed to reach Dhaka. Construction of this road began in 1980 under the then president Zia's government and with the initiative of the then prime minister

It's not very easy to get a telephone connection

From Staff Correspondent BARISAL, July 30: Getting a new telephone connections is a troublesome matter for a consumer in Barisal who intends to get a new telephone line. At present, there are 2,800 telephone lines including two container exchanges having a capacity of 300 lines each. Meanwhile, 2,780 connections have already been given to the consumers following increasing demands of telephone connections in the newly formed Barisal Divisional headquarters. According to a T&T source, still there are about 2,000 applications for telephone lines are pending with the T&T and the number of applications are increasing almost every day. A departmental source said, a new 5000 line-capacity digital exchange will be set up at Barisal soon. The existing old exchanges will be withdrawn in phases.

Scarcity of hilsa fish

From Staff Correspondent BARISAL, July 30: Hilsa fish which were abundant in the coastal areas have become almost scarce due to various reasons. According to sources, only three to five years back hilsa fish were abundant in the rivers of southern districts but now it scarce due to catching of jatka. Hilsa fry in large scale ignoring government ban by some unscrupulous fishermen. Now the shortfall is evident in different fish markets of southern district, fishermen said. On the other hand, due to piracy in the rivers many fishermen cannot go to catch fish in the rivers. Dacoity and piracy in different rivers on fishing trawlers is going on almost unabated. Price of hilsa fish has gone up by more than fifty per cent in different fish markets. Hundreds of fishing trawlers remained stranded at Patharghata, Nali, Khepupara and some other destinations near the sea. Mentionable, so far two fishing trawlers have been sunk in the Bay leaving three fishermen missing this year.