

Pirates rule Meghna estuary

10 killed, 120 abducted in a year: Fishing boats have to keep red flag hoisted after toll payment

AKTER FARUK, Barisal

After the surrender of notorious ring leader Joyal Speaker last year, another gang of pirates has emerged which has kept several thousand fishermen virtually hostage in the Meghna estuary now.

Fishermen have to keep red flags hoisted in their boats and trailers after collecting 'token' from Alauddin Bahini on payment of toll, which ranges from Tk 10,000 to Tk 50,000.

According to sources in fishermen's associations, 183 fishing boats and trawlers in Tajumuddin, Borhanuddin and Lalmoan upazilas of Bhola have collected red flags after paying tolls.

No fisherman can fish in the estuary defying them.

At least 10 fishermen were

killed and 60 injured, 40 of them bullet-hit, in attacks by the gang members in last one year for defiance, the sources said.

They also abducted 120 fishermen, threw 32 into the river and snatched 110 fishing trawlers since June last year. They collect ransom ranging from Tk 10,000 to Tk 50,000 for release of abducted fishermen.

In last one month, the gang looted at least sixty fishing boats in the area.

Following earlier press reports, law enforcers had launched massive hunts and arrested most of Joyal Speaker's gang members. Kala Faruk was shot dead, notorious Jahangir fled the area and Jinal Speaker surrendered to police.

The situation improved, but the waters did not remain peaceful for

fishermen for long.

One Alauddin of Mirjakalu in Tajumuddin organised a gang of armed pirates, allegedly with the help of a local Union Parishad chairman and some influential ruling party leaders. They have recruited pirates from Tajumuddin, Char Tozammal, Char Manupura and Kailash Char.

They collected Tk 15,000 each from Abdul Barek, Mokhles Khan, abducted during piracy in fishing boats Sikandar Majhi and Harun Majhi on June 14. The abducted fishermen were rescued from Boyar Char after payment of tolls.

The gang leader used cell phones (0172-542721 and 0172-244063) during the toll collection, the sources said.

Fishing boats belonging to Shahid, Nurul Majhi, Gour Netai,

Mahmudullah, Badal Chandra, Farid, Mia Majhi, Gedu, Soleman Zakir Majhi and Faruk Majhi were looted between June 17 and June 21.

At least 25 other trawlers were looted between June 23 and July 14, the sources alleged.

Complaints to police produced no result, they alleged.

A high official in Bhola police, when contacted, talked to this correspondent seeking anonymity.

He said armed pirates are active in bordering areas of Bhola, Laxmipur and Noakhali districts.

"They have sophisticated firearms and better transports than we have".

Only a joint combing operation by police in the districts can control piracy in the Meghna estuary, he said.

Unknown disease claims 2 in Comilla

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Comilla

Two children of a family died within 24 hours after they were attacked with an unknown disease in Barura upazila.

Symptoms of the disease are high fever, black vomiting and congestion in the lungs. Three others of the family are at hospital with the same symptoms.

Asia Begum, 9 and Shuma Akter, 7, daughters of Abul Hossain of Shilora village of Galimpur union in the upazila were admitted to Barura Health Complex at about 6am on July 12 and shifted to Comilla Medical College Hospital where they died at about 10pm.

The CMCH authorities formed a three-member body comprising Dr. Abul Hasnat, Dr. Anisur Rahman and Dr. Shahjahan to identify the disease.

Blood, vomit and urine samples of the victims are now being cultured at the CMCH, sources there said.

Abul Hossain's wife Rajia Khatun, 40, their another daughter Akhra Khatun, 13 and son Delwar Hossain, also attacked with the disease, are now under treatment at Barura health complex.

'Beef can be a forex earner'

Cow fattening fattens Azad in a remote village

AMANUR AMAN, Kushtia

Many in Badhpara village have started cow fattening, seeing Azad's surprising success. This was beyond their imagination just two years back.

Abul Kalam Azad, 37, a government employee in the Department of Labour in Kushtia town, has earned fortune from cow fattening at his village, about eight kilometres from the town.

Azad had bought two cows from a local market in 2000 at Tk 20,000. After one year, he sold those at Tk 80,000 ahead of the Eid-ul-Azha. He decided to expand his project and applied to the Department of Youth Development (DYD) for loan but was refused because only people having training from the department are eligible for this.

Azad asked his younger brother Akram to take training at Kushtia youth development training centre.

After training, Akram applied for loan. The DYD gave him only loan Tk 30,000. Azad took another Tk 30,000 loan from Krishi Bank by mortgaging his land.

Together, it was a meager amount for his plan. Azad borrowed Tk two lakh and bought 14 cows on June 2002 at Tk 1.75 lakh.

The two brothers raised the cows with care and also engaged two persons.

They sold those ahead of the Eid-ul-Azha last year at about Tk 7.50 lakh and earned a net profit of about Tk three lakh within one year.

Now Azad has 20 cows in his farm. He hopes to earn a profit of over five lakh ahead of the Eid-ul-Azha this year.

"My success encouraged many unemployment youths in the village and they have started this business", Azad told this correspondent during a recent visit to his village.

"Lack of treatment facilities for

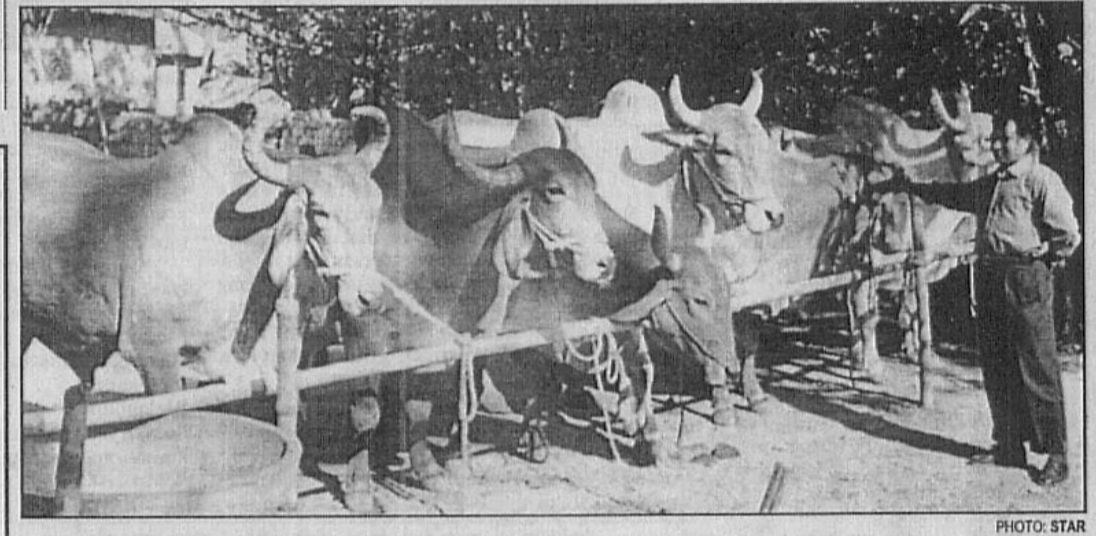
cows is a major problem in the rural area", Azad said.

He also raised some allegations against government's livestock department officials. They demand extra money whenever any body goes to them for treatment of sick cows, he alleged.

Fodder is another problem, he said. Pasturelands are scarce. The government department should take steps to produce fodder other than grass, he said.

The government should come forward with more facilities to encourage youths in such projects in rural areas. This will solve the unemployment problem to a great extent and increase national wealth.

"Our beef is better than those produced in other countries. This can earn foreign exchange also if the government takes steps to develop the sector", Azad said. He plans to expand the project further.



Abul Kalam Azad with his cows in his farm at Badhpara village.

PHOTO: STAR

Relief in Sylhet, Sunamganj inadequate, says Ershad

'Fifty paise relief given per head'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Jatiya Party Chairman and former president HM Ershad has urged the government to give adequate relief including house building loan to flood victims in Sylhet and Sunamganj.

He was talking to newsmen at a hotel in Sylhet city on Friday after visiting some flood affected areas.

"The flood situation in Sylhet and Sunamganj is critical. I have noticed in newspapers that 50 paise per head has so far been given as relief among the victims," Ershad said. JP Secretary General ABM Ruhul Amin Hawlader and other party leaders accompanied him during the visit.

The former president said law and order situation is alarming in the country. Giving death threat has become a fashion nowadays. The

people are telling about Bangla Bhai but the government is ignoring the issue, he added.

Asked about his party's future, Ershad said, "Jatiya party has good prospect because people are frustrated with performance of both Awami League and BNP governments". A process is on to unite Jatiya Party factions, he added.

He suggested introduction of 'provincial system of administration' because it is not possible for one Prime Minister to resolve problems of 15 crore people. He mentioned that the upazila system introduced during his rule has proved effective.

He told a questioner that Bangladesh would not have emerged had there been no Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

Disaster looms on aquaculture industry

Inbreeding causes growth retardation, rise in mortality.

STAR NATIONAL DESK

Cultured fishes are facing growth retardation, rise in mortality, poor reproductive performance and loss of immunity due to inbreeding in fish seeds.

If not addressed properly, these problems will bring in a disaster in aquaculture industry in the country, experts said at a workshop in Khulna, according to a press release issued by the organisers here yesterday.

The experts called upon the government to take steps to check inbreeding in fish seed to save the budding and prospective aquaculture industry.

Inbreeding is primarily caused by repeated cross-breeding among successive generations of the same or similar genetic lines.

The workshop on 'Production of Inbred Free Aquaculture Seeds and Good Quality Feed' was organized by ATDP (Agro Based Industry and Technology Development Project) at CSS auditorium in Khulna on Wednesday.

Senior Assistant Secretary of the Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock Hamim Hasan, Khulna Deputy

Director of Department of Fishery Sheikh Ashraf Ali, ATDP Senior Agribusiness Director Nii Akwei, BFFEA Joint Secretary General Humayun Kabir, Prof Saifuddin Shah of Khulna University and Dr Abul Hossain and Abdul Baten of ATDP attended the workshop, among others. ATDP Policy Director Nazrul Islam presided.

Fish and shrimp farmers, hatchery owners, trade associations and NGOs also attended the workshop.

The objective of the workshop was to assess the impact of existing policy on aquaculture seeds and quality of feed used and to identify and recommend reform measures.

The workshop suggested use of only proven and scientifically tested large brood fish to contain the inbreeding problem and setting up of a central gene and brood bank in public sector to supply inbreeding-free broods and seed to hatchery owners.

It also suggested proper screening of both brood and larvae in Bagda hatcheries to contain diseases.

Quality feed should be used so that the aquaculture industry can expand vertically.

TWIN MURDER IN SATKHIRA

Police yet to nab killers

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

Police could not arrest the killers of the sensational twin murder (mother and daughter) case even after over 36 hours of the incident at Sreula village in Assassuni upazila on Tuesday night.

The deceased are Shahanara Khatun, 26, wife of Abbas Ali and their daughter Masuma, 4, of the same village.

The villagers found Shahanara's body hanging with the branch of a tree near Akbar Ali Mollah's house at the same village while Masuma's body was recovered by people from a nearby pond, according to police.

Miscreants abducted the victim's husband Abbas Ali from his house on July 4 as he was a witness of a toll collection case, local people said. Since then he was missing.

On July 10, Shahanara filed a general diary (GD) with Assassuni thana for abducting her husband. She named Mizanur Rahman, Bhutto, Akbar Ali Mollah, Abu Sayeed, Zulfikar Ali and Palash of the same village as accused.

Being informed, sub-inspector (SI) of police Abdul Majid of Assassuni thana went to the spot to investigate the case but he came back after taking bribe from the accused, alleged local people. From then on the miscreants became violent and began to threaten

her.

On Tuesday afternoon, both the ill-fated mother and daughter went to a relative's house at the same village. They set for home from there at about 10 that night.

While on way home, the miscreants abducted and strangled them, according to local people. After the twin murder, they tried to divert into an incident of suicide. They hanged the housewife's body with the branch of a tree and threw her daughter's body into the pond, local people alleged.

However, after several hours of the incident police filed a murder case.

SNAPS

6 die from snake bite

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

Six people including four housewives died here from snake bite in two days.

Local people said, Shamim, 7, son of Abul Kashem of Barar village, Nijhila Begum, 35, widow of Chandpur village, Kohinor Islam, 18, son of Aseruddin of Atari village and Khuku Begum, 31, of Patkheighata village in Tala upazila died while they were sleeping in their houses on Thursday night.

On Wednesday night, Sonali Ghosh, 22, wife of Chitta Ranjan of Asian village in Kaliganj upazila and Hasina Khatun, 28, wife of Abdur Rashid of Thana ghata village in Sadar upazila also died while they were sleeping in their houses.

VCD, DVD recovered from night coach

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

A team of Barisal Kotwali police led by Sub-inspector Abdul Mannan seized some VCDs, DVDs and other electronic items worth about Tk one lakh from a night coach Friday early morning.

The coach arrived in the city from Benapole, police said.

The items were bore 'Made in India' seals and labels. None could be arrested as the person who brought those escaped sensing police presence, police said. A case has been lodged.

Mother, daughter drown

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bararia

A mother and her daughter drowned in a boat capsized in Golachipa Beel in Bancharampur upazila on Friday.

Jarina Begum, 35, and her daughter Josana Begum, 17, were among some passengers going to Ganganagar in a mechanised country boat. As the boat capsized amid a gusty wind, all others except the two swam shore. Their bodies were later recovered, police said.

Govt alone can not face flood disaster: Dulu

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gaibandha

It is not possible for the government alone to face disaster from floods, said Deputy Minister for Relief and Disaster Management Ahadul Haib Dulu.

He called upon all, particularly political parties and the affluent section of the society, to come forward to help the affected people.

He was addressing a crowd while distributing relief among flood victims at Gaibandha Al-Falah Madrasah ground on Friday.

The BNP government is always with the people and will continued to extend all possible help to the distressed. A post-flood rehabilitation programme will be launched when the flood waters recede.

He said any corruption or irregularity in relief distribution will be death with an iron hand.

The minister later visited flood affected Fulchari upazila where he distributed rice and cash among the victims. He also visited flood ravaged Balashi railway ferry terminal.

Journalist Shamsur Rahman's death anniversary observed

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jessore

The fourth death anniversary of journalist Shamsur Rahman, former special correspondent of the Janakantha was observed here on Friday.

Jessore Union of Journalists organised a discussion meeting here.

Presided over by local newsman Shajedur Rahman, the meeting was addressed, among others, by BFUJ president Iqbal Sobhan Chowdhury, secretary general Monjurul Ahsan Bulbul, president of Dhaka Union of Journalists Altaf Mahmud, journalist leaders Dipankar Chakraborti of Bogra, Shahidul Alam of Chittagong, president of journalists' welfare samity Kalligan Shah, Zahid Hossain of Khulna, Fizzor Hossain, leader of Photo Journalists' Association, Mostafizur Rahman of Rajshahi, Probir Sikdar of Faridpur, Shamirul Aison of Dinajpur and Shah Alamgir of Dhaka.

Journalist Shamsur Rahman was shot dead on July 16 night in 2000 when he was working at his office in Jessore.



Freedom fighters formed a human chain in Brahmanbaria town yesterday in observance of their Demand Day. Their demands include Tk 2000 monthly allowance for each freedom fighter. They also held a discussion meeting earlier on the day.

PHOTO: STAR

Appointment of Short-Term Consultant

The project entitled "BGD/96/018 -- Strengthening the Election Commission for Improvement in the Electoral Process" is being implemented by the Election Commission Secretariat with support of UNDP since September 1997.

The project is going to field a Monitoring cum Formulation Mission **in between last week of August to 1st week of September 2004 for a period 3 (three) weeks.** The mission will be comprised of 3 (three) international and 2 (two) National Consultants. The overall objective of the Mission is twofold: A) to conduct an in-depth evaluation of the BGD/96/018 project (hereafter EC project); and B) to develop a Project Document for a new initiative with the Bangladesh Election Commission.

Applications are invited from eligible Bangladeshi nationals to fill the post of (1) National Consultant on Evaluation, (2) National Consultant on Formulation. The qualifications for the posts are:

- Qualifications for the National Consultant on Evaluation**
- The candidate should have a Master's Degree in a relevant field, be sufficiently competent as an evaluator with a minimum of 5 years prior experience in national project evaluations and be familiar with Government of Bangladesh procedure for Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation of Development Projects. Preferably, the candidate would have extensive knowledge in the area of electoral processes in Bangladesh and the work of the Election Commission in particular.
- Qualifications for the National Consultant on Formulation**
- The candidate should have a Master's Degree in a relevant field, be sufficiently competent in project formulation with a minimum of 5 years experience in design and implementation of development projects and be familiar with Government of Bangladesh procedure for Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation of Development Projects. Preferably, the candidate would have extensive knowledge in the area of electoral processes in Bangladesh and the work of the Election Commission in particular.

Applications with complete CV (as per UN guidelines on writing CV preferable) be forwarded by post to National Project Director, SECIEP Project, Election Commission Secretariat, Block 5, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka-1205. It must reach on or before 27 July 2004. Any attempt to influence the recruitment process would lead to automatic disqualification. Only short-listed candidates will be contacted.

The recruitment will be made according to provisions of Manual of National Execution of UNDP supported project in Bangladesh (The NEX Manual).

Women are encouraged to Apply

GD-424

Good governance stressed to curb violence on women

Naripakkho view-exchange meeting told in Ctg

BSS, Chittagong

Speakers at a meeting to exchange views here on Friday stressed on good governance, mass awareness and female education to curb violence on women.

Leading women's organisation Naripakkho in collaboration with OXFAM, BIFA (Bangladesh Institute of Theater Arts) and Pratyayashi organised the meeting titled "Formulation of Policy to Prevent Women Persecution."

Held at the Zila Parishad auditorium, the meeting was attended by the divisional commissioner of Chittagong, Mohamma Ashrafui Makbul as chief guest.

Prof Shahidullah of the Department of Journalism, Chittagong University, Nasirul Hoque, former president of Chittagong Union of Journalists (CUJ), Rehena Kabir, ward commissioner, Manowara Begum, executive director of Pratyayashi, Prof Ferdous Ara Alam, executive director of BIFA Jesmin Sultana Parul took part in the meeting.

The speakers underscored the need for female education, creation of job opportunities for women and stern enforcement of existing laws.

They also underlined the need for creating a favourable atmosphere at their work places so that they can work with their male counterparts at ease.

The participants also urged the political leaders to ensure women's representation in their parties.

Puthia CPB leader held

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Natore district police on Thursday arrested a political leader from Puthia upazila which is beyond their jurisdiction.

Abul Kalam Azad, president of Puthia upazila unit of the Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) was arrested from his Konamaria village home in Shilmaria union of Puthia by Natore Sadar thana police without knowledge of Puthia police. They took him straight to Natore, Puthia thana officer-in-charge (OC) Akram Hossain told this confirming the report. He also told he heard the news, but knew no detail of it.

OC accused of harbouring outlaws

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Fifty year-old Zarina Begum has sought hanging of her life following alleged death threat by Fakirhat Sadar Union Parishad Chairman Zahid Hasan.

Addressing a press conference here on Friday, she claimed that Zahid Hasan is a regional leader of Janajuddho faction of outlawed PBCP (Purba Banglar Communist Party). She hails from Pagla Diapara village under Fakirhat upazila.

She also accused the UP chairman the murder of her son Khilafat Hossain as he wanted to return to normal life.

She has also accused Officer-in-Charge of Fakirhat thana for harbouring armed cadres of PBCP (I) led by the UP chairman.

Zarina Begum said that her son was a student of Fakirhat Alia Madrasa. "My son was forced by the UP chairman to join Janajuddho faction of PBCP. He was given a cell phone and a monthly allowance. He was killed by the UP chairman when he wanted to return to normal life", she claimed.

Now the UP chairman is moving freely, she said.

Zarina alleged that she went to Fakirhat thana earlier on Friday to file a case for her son's murder but police did not accept it.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Office of the Executive Engineer

Narsingdi Public Works Division, Narsingdi

Tender Amendment Notice

It is hereby notified for general information that, under unavoidable circumstance, the undermentioned amendments are brought to Tender No 78 dt 7-6-2004, name of work: Under Establishment of 7 (seven) Technical Training Centres in Bangladesh Project, construction of 1 (one) at Shibpur of Narsingdi district. (Sub-head: Construction of Academic Building including internal sewerage & water supply works. Financial year: 2003-2004).

1. Last date of selling tender : 26-7-2004 instead of 7-7-2004.
2. Date of receiving tender : 27-7-2004 up to 12.00 hrs instead of 8-7-2004.
3. Date of opening tender : 27-7-2004 at 3.00 PM instead of 14-7-2004. At the office of the undersigned & in presence of tender committee members.
4. Place of selling tender: Office of the undersigned & all Executive Engineers' offices under Dhaka Public Works Zone and Executive Engineer, Public Works Maintenance Division, Dhaka/Chittagong Public Works Division-3 of Chittagong Zone/Khulna Public Works Division-1, Public Works Directorate, Khulna Zone/Rajshahi Public Works Division-1, Public Works Directorate, Rajshahi Zone/Chief Arboriculturist, Dhaka Arboriculture Public Works Division, Dhaka & Divisional Commissioner, Dhaka Division, Dhaka. No tender document will be sold on the date of receiving tender. The tender amendment notice will be available also at the Public Works Directorate's official website (www.pwd.gov.bd).
5. Office of the undersigned, Divisional Commissioner, Dhaka Division, 1st 12-storey Building, Segunbagicha, Dhaka, Eden Building Public Works Division, Dhaka instead of office of the undersigned & Executive Engineer, Motijheel Public Works Division, Azampur Public Works Division, Narayanganj Public Works Division, Munshiganj Public Works Division, Resources Public Works Division, Eden Public Works Division, Bangladesh Secretariat, Dhaka/Mirpur Public Works Division/Sher-e-Bangla Nagar Public Works Division-2/Chief Arboriculturist, Arboriculture Public Works Division, Dhaka & Divisional Commissioner, Dhaka Division, Dhaka. After receipt of tenders for the said work at the said offices those should be reached in sealed condition as received in tender box by special messenger to the office of the undersigned on the same day of submitting tender by 3.00 PM. If not reached by that time, then it will be presumed that no tender for the said work has been received at his office.

All other terms & conditions shall remain unchanged. This amendment page shall be treated as part of the tender.

DFF-17168-8/7
G-417

Executive Engineer
Narsingdi Public Works Division, Narsingdi