

Shrimp fry a prospective forex earner

Tk 800 cr annual earnings estimated initially: Good market in India

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Satkhira*

The prospect of shrimp sector as a foreign exchange earner has brightened with the possibility of bulk exports of fries.

Traders and shrimp fry hatchery owners say the county can earn around Tk 800 crore from exporting shrimp fries produced in Satkhira, Khulna and Cox's Bazar hatcheries after meeting the home demand if a little attention is paid to the sector. It can be increased substantially in future.

The prospect has been opened with the export of fries to India.

An Indian company -Ata Export Company- imported 10 lakh fries from Modern Hatchery at Cox's Bazar, the first consignment sent through Bhomra land port here on February 15. The Indian company

will import 20 crore fries.

The export deal has raises hopes among hatchery owners.

According to sources in the Shrimp Fry Hatchery Owners Association, there are 53 hatcheries in Cox's Bazar which produce shrimp fry. They can produce over 2000 crore shrimp fries annually, if scientific methods are applied and things are planned well.

The domestic demand is only 400 to 500 crore fries for shrimp enclosures in about 6000 hectares of land in Satkhira, Khulna, Bagerhat and Cox's Bazar, they said.

About 1500 crore fries can be exported, they said.

According to Fisheries Department sources, shrimps are being cultivated now on 4706 hectares in Satkhira and 1284

hectares in Khulna, Bagerhat and Cox's Bazar.

Now, shrimp fries are sold at Tk 200 to Tk 300 per thousand in Satkhira, Khulna and Bagerhat markets.

Officials of Modern Hatchery at Satkhira said the fries exported to India are of good quality, as stated by the officials of Ata Export Company, who visited the some hatcheries.

Shrimp fry trader Abul Kalam Babla told this correspondent that another Indian company has sent a proposal to import 20 crore fries.

Officials of Souidia Hatchery in Satkhira, which represents another Indian company, said a huge quantity of fries can be exported to India if quality is maintained.

Shrimp fry can be a good export sector if the government takes up a

comprehensive programme, said Satkhira Chamber of Commerce and Industries President Sheikh Azhar Hossain.

He urged the government to come forward with a program for technical support so that hatchery owners can produce good quality fries for export. Bangladesh usually exports frozen adult shrimps to USA and European countries.

Shrimp cultivators Abdul Mazid, Salamattullah, Abdul Bari, Alhaj Shamsheer Gazi said the production of both shrimps and fries can be increased if they are trained in scientific methods of cultivation.

He said shrimp farms now release fries three to four times more than needed because of ignorance. A large quantity is destroyed now.

Zia Fertiliser resumes production

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *B'baria*

Ashugonj Zia Fertiliser Factory resumed production on Tuesday after seven days' suspension following a fire incident.

The factory incurred a loss of about Tk five crore during the period, sources there said.

The production was stopped on February 22 following a fire in its Amonia plant.

The production loss has been estimated at 11,000 tonnes. The factory produces 1600 tonnes of urea a day.

The Managing Director of the factory said its own engineers repaired the damage caused by the fire.

Peacekeeper laid to rest in Nilphamari

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Nilphamari*

A Bangladeshi peacekeeper, killed on Friday in a militia ambush in Congo, was laid to rest on Tuesday at his village home here with full military honour.

He was buried beside his mother at the family graveyard at Araj Charai Khola village in Sadar upazila.

Earlier, a plane carried the body of soldier Abdus Salam to Syedpur from Dhaka. His coffin was covered with the flags of both Bangladesh and the United Nations (UN).

His coffin was brought to Babri Jhar High School ground near his village home. He was a student of the school. His namaj-e-janaza was held here at 2:30 p.m. Babri Jhar Jame Mosque Imam conducted the janaza.

Acting Rangpur area Commander Brigadier General Mahmud Hasan, military and district administration officials, relatives of the deceased, 500 army personnel and 10,000 people of the village and surrounding areas joined the janaza. After the Janaja his body was brought to his home. A pall of gloom descended there as his relatives were sobbing.

Tension mounts in Kulaura border

BSF raising barbed-wire fence violating flag meeting decisions

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Mulvibazar*

Tension is amounting in Bangladesh-India border at Sharifpur in Kulaura upazila as Indian Border Security Force (BSF) is erecting barbed wire fence in the no man's land between border pillars no 1861 and 1862, violating decisions of flag meetings twice.

The BSF also took away three Bangladeshis from Bangladesh territory last week, villagers there alleged. The victims are yet to be returned.

BDR sources at Sharifpur border outpost (BOP) said BSF has increased its strength along the border.

They said they have kept the Srimongol Battalion Headquarter informed of the situation and are ready to face a situation.

During a visit to the border area on Monday, BDR personnel at Sharifpur BOP said BSF on the night of February 15 had attempted to raise barbed wire fence in the no mans land. They also did some earth-filling work there to facilitate movement of trucks and other heavy vehicles.

As BDR protested, a company commander level flag meeting was held on the following day, where BSF agreed to stop the work. But on the night of February 26, BSF again attempted to raise barbed wire on the no man's land between pillars no 1861 and 1862.

BDR protests it again and a flag meeting was held again. BSF agreed again to stop the work. But after the flag meeting, they began the work again.

BDR Nayk Subeder Md Khalilur Rahman at the BOP told this correspondent that BSF has increased its strength in the last two days. "We are ready to face any situation", he said.

Bangladeshis living the border area are in panic and some villagers left homes in Chandpur village, close to the border.

The villagers alleged that BSF personnel have taken away three Bangladeshis who were labourers of Chattapur Tea Estate.

Raju, 16, Paitali, 17 and Nimai, 16, were cutting grass for cows in Gutbari inside Bangladesh territory. BSF personnel intruded and took them away on gunpoint, their families alleged. They said they do not

know anything about their fate.

BDR sources at Sharifpur BOP however said they are yet get any complaint from the families in this regard.

Bid in Akhaura stopped after flag meeting

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Brahmanbaria*

Raising of barbed wire fence on the no man's land along Akhaura border by Indian Border Security Force (BSF) has been stopped following a flag meeting with BDR, held at Agartala BSF camp on Monday.

The battalion commander level meeting also discussed killing of Bangladeshis by BSF and cross-border crimes including smuggling and trafficking.

Bangladesh side was represented at the meeting by 7 Battalion Commanding Officer Lt. Col. Syed Kamruzzaman.

BSF had been trying to raise barbed wire fence at 21 points along the border, BDR source said.

Another flag meeting at Deputy Director General level will be held on March 13-15, they said.

Training on quake aftermath held in Rangpur

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Rangpur*

A day-long training on Community Based Earthquake Management was held in Rangpur yesterday.

Organised by Tradeshome-Italy, the programme was attended by Union Parishad leaders and local elite from Gajgahnta and Momea unions in Gangachara upzila.

It focussed on community role in taking emergency measures after earthquake and facing natural calamities like flood, cyclone and drought.

Team Leader from the European Commission Humanitarian Office (ECHO), Zahangir Alam Moloy Chaki, Programme Co-ordinator of Bangladesh Disaster Preparedness (BDPC) and Shirin Khan, Project Manager (Earthquake) of BDPC conducted the training, held at Rangpur Rotary Club.

Mentionably, the Disaster Management Committee, with the help of some NGOs, is creating awareness among people in the two unions about natural calamities



PHOTO: STAR

A partial of the training workshop on Community Based Earthquake Management, held in Rangpur yesterday.

Ruling party men sheltering zealots, says Inu

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Manikganj*

Crimes increased in the country as the ruling parties are patronising criminals and Islamist militants, Jatiya Samajtantric Dal president Hasanul Haque Inu has alleged.

The government should step down accepting its failure to ensure security of people's life and property, he said while addressing a party council held at Saturia Pilot High School ground on Tuesday.

He heavily criticised the government for price hike of essentials and of fertiliser and fuel during the current IRRI-Boro season.

He claimed that the government failed to run the country and demanded formation of a "national government" to free the people from the "misrule of the four-party alliance government."

He urged the party workers and all pro-liberation forces to unite and intensify the on going anti-government agitation.

With Saturia upazila JSD president Ahammad Ali in the chair, the meeting was addressed by, among others, JSD central joint secretary Iqbal Hossain Khan, central leader Afzal Hossain Khan Zoki, its Manikganj district unit vice presidents Harej Ali and Jeebesh Chakrabarty, organising secretary Aslam Khan Babu, Krishak Jote President Moslem Uddin Khan, Abdur Razzak, Animul Islam Kohinur and Arif Hossain Liton.

Inu urged the government to ban all extremist religious outfits to contain rise of fundamentalist forces in the country.

They are out to capture power in the name of religion, which will turn Bangladesh into another Afghanistan, he said.

BNP leader expelled

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Magura*

A local BNP leader has been expelled from the party.

Mohammadpur thana BNP Organising Secretary Nazrul Islam has been punished for 'involvement in anti-organisational activities', according to party sources.

The decision was taken at a meeting of the district BNP on Tuesday.

Nazrul was arrested on charge of beating a 'Tahashildar' (tax collector) and illegally collecting sand from land on Monday.

The action followed a BNP factional clash on Saturday.

'Criminals, drug addicts' in Magura Jubo League

Scrapping of new dist body demanded

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Magura*

Jobo League (JL) leaders from four upazilas and one municipal unit in Magura at a press conference at Magura Press Club on Tuesday demanded scrapping of its newly formed six-member district convening committee, saying it includes 'criminals, drug addicts and musclemans'.

They sought intervention by central leaders and threatened of resignation for non-compliance.

They said central leaders in March last dissolved the Magura district JL committee to form a new one to strengthen the organisation.

But the new convening committee formed with "unwanted persons", announced by the central leaders on February 26, has damaged the party's image.

They said the new convener of district JL, Enamul Huq Hirok, is a "known criminal" and 'activist of outlawed Sarbahara Party'. He had abducted Sreepur upazila Awami

League general secretary Nurul Molla for a ransom of Tk 2 lakh in 1991 and Nurul was freed after payment of the ransom.

They further alleged that in the same year, Hirok got himself admitted to Degree first year in Magura Government College with a forged HSC certificate and faced a criminal case for forgery.

The new joint-secretary, Kamruzzaman Pintu, is a 'drug addict'. Police arrested him several times with phensidyle and heroin in last one year, they claimed.

They said college teacher Zibrul Islam, who has been made a member of the convening committee, was a 'cadre' of Islami Chattra Shibir (ICS) when he was a student at Kustia Islamic University. He is a spy planted by ICS, they claimed.

Another convening committee member, Zahangir Hossain, is a musclemans, Zahangir, a former union parishad chairman, worked for a BNP candidate in last parliament election

for money. He had also assaulted Mahila Jubo League central president Nazma Rahman at a conference last year in Magura as she declined to make Zahangir's wife Bithi president of the district unit, the JL leaders alleged at the press conference.

Some vested quarters in the district AL is behind inclusion of such "unwanted persons" in JL, they claimed.

JL Magura municipal unit president Md. Atiar Rahman Nihar read out a written statement at the press conference.

It was also addressed by, among others, new joint-convener of district JL Awal Hossain, its former president Sohel Parvez Deep, Salim Khan and Aminuddin Ahmed.

Meanwhile, the new convener, Enamul Huq Hirok, in a statement protested the comments against him and the convening committee and said this is a "conspiracy" to tarnish his image.

Political leaders demand Rajshahi SP's withdrawal

JMJB operations stopped killings by outlaws, claims SP

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, *Rajshahi*

Local leaders of different political parties and social organisations have reiterated their demand for immediate removal of Rajshahi Police Superintendent Masud Mia for allegedly helping Bangla Bhai in his efforts to leave the country.

A police report after internal investigation last month had recommended the SP's withdrawal to "save the image of the government".

Talking to this correspondent, Workers' Party Politburo member Fazle Hossain Badsha has said, "We believe the government's aim to maintain law and order in Rajshahi region will fail if officials who helped Bangla Bhai are not punished".

Rajshahi Awami League General Secretary AHM Khairuzzaman Liton said, "He (the SP) should have been withdrawn long before. It is now clear that the government's ultimate goal is

to patronise religious extremists".

A Rajshahi BNP leader seeking anonymity said, "I do not know why some of our lawmakers want him (SP) in Rajshahi. The government is facing criticism because of him".

The Awami League-led 14-party alliance on February 1 submitted a memorandum to Rajshahi Deputy Commissioner demanding the SP's withdrawal.

Rajshahi Rakkha Sangram Parishad Convenor Zamat Khan has said they will launch agitation if the SP is not withdrawn immediately.

Asked why action is not taken after the report, the source said, "Top ruling party men back him".

When contacted, SP Masud Mia said, "Badsha like many other leaf leaders are patrons of outlaws".

"You saw people were being killed one after another. Why the killing stopped suddenly?" The SP gave to understand that the killings by outlaws stopped because of JMJB (Jagrata Muslim Janata Bangladesh) opera-

tions.

Asked why there is no case against Bangla Bhai, he said, "Where from case will come if there is none to complain?"

On May 23 last year, several thousand JMJB activists armed with bamboo poles and hockey sticks staged a showdown in Rajshahi city under police escort.

They held two meetings at Shaheb Bazar Zero point and Gourhanga Rail Crossing and handed over memorandum to Deputy Commissioner Aziz Hasan, Deputy Inspector General (DIG) Noor Muhammad, Police Superintendent Masud Mia Rajshahi. At the rallies, they also threatened journalists for reports on Bangla Bhai.

While receiving the memorandum, the SP had said, "We (police) hail you (JMJB) as you are helping us eliminate Sarbaharas (outlaws) from Rajshahi. We must cooperate with you in coming days so that people can live in peace."

Tax evasion: Onion trucks seized at Bhomra

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Satkhira*

Two trucks carrying Indian onions weighing 15,334-kilogram were seized by the BDR on Sunday. The onions were imported allegedly by evading tax.

According to sources in Bhomra Land Port, M/s Raj Enterprise of Farashganj, Dhaka imported the onions. The business firm opened a Letter of Credit (LC) to import 14,560-kilogram of onions. But the firm imported an additional 774-kilogram of onion.

On suspicion, the BDR team intercepted the loaded trucks and seized the onions.

Later, the onions were deposited to the Customs godown on Monday.

SNAPS

14 yrs RI for abducting girl

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Satkhira*

Five abductors were awarded 14 years rigorous imprisonment (RI) each by a court here on Tuesday. The convicts are Amirul Islam, Shafulul Islam, Abul Kashem, Abdul Hakim and Abul Hashem of Parkukhrail village in Sadar upazila. They kidnapped Sima Rani Sarkar, 15, a student of class nine of Nabarun Girls' High School on November 6, 2003. She was abducted on the way to school. The judge of Women Repression Prevention Court Mahtabuddin pronounced the judgement.

Life term for killing wife

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Gaibandha*

A court here on Monday sentenced one person to life term imprisonment for murdering his wife. The convict is Sunil Chandra Das of Palanpara village in Palashbari upazila. The District and Sessions Judge Court, Gaibandha also fined him Tk 5,000, in default, to suffer one year additional imprisonment. Sunil Chandra killed his wife Minati Rani with deadly weapons following a quarrel over lending money on May 2, 2002. Sessions judge AMM Sayeed pronounced the verdict.