

Shrimp fry collectors damage 229 species of fishes



ABDULLAH -AL MAHMUD

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 Several thousand people are collecting shrimp fries indiscriminately in the coastal areas damaging other species of fishes. Massive collection of shrimp fries is going on in the river Karnaphuli and the coast along Anwara upazila and in the river Feni in and around Muhuri project at Mirer Sarai. They collect fries with porous cloths irrespective of species and keep them into jars and pots. During the process of sorting out, huge fries of other species are simply left over on the shores to be destroyed, witnesses said. As many as 229 species of other fishes are destroyed during the sorting out of shrimp fries (Bagda - saline water variety) or prawn (Galda - mild water variety), says a recent statistics of Marine Research Institute of Chittagong University. Besides, illegal collection of fries is threatening availability of shrimps here, experts said. Scarcity of shrimp fries is a must in the near future if all the fries are collected leaving none to grow up for spawning, they said. Thousands of people from Khulna, Satkhira, Bagerhat and

Jessore flock to Chittagong during the peak season (Baishak-Jaishtha) of shrimp spawning every year. Under the patronisation of local influential syndicates, they collect the shrimp fries in the Karnaphuli, mainly at the portion stretching from Kalurghat bridge to Shah Amanat bridge, and in the coastal areas of Anwara adjoining Karnaphuli estuary. At Mirer Sarai, some 2000 people are engaged in the destructive job in the Feni river at Muhuri Project sluice gate, Bamunshunder, Shahekhali, Ichhakhali and Domekhali areas. The syndicates engage the fry collectors as temporary employees, on the basis of daily wages or collection-wise, sources said. The collectors sell the fries at Tk 1000 to Tk 1500 per thousand to the middlemen. And the middlemen sell those to shrimp enclosure owners at Tk 2000. Later, the shrimp fries are supplied to different enclosures in Khulna, Satkhira, Bagerhat and Jessor for cultivation. The authorities of fisheries department expressed inability to check the practice due to lack of manpower and logistic support. Meanwhile, experts and

concerned circles emphasised improving the quality of fries produced at hatcheries side by side with strengthening the concerned authorities to end illegal fry collection. They said the saline water of Cox's Bazar is suitable for hatching fries and the salinity mixed water of Khulna, Satkhira, Bagerhat and Jessore suitable for shrimp cultivation. The shrimp enclosures of the southwestern region depend on the fries produced in Cox's Bazar and Chittagong. On the other hand, the mild water in Mirer Sarai and Sitakunda is suitable for prawn cultivation. The fries produced at different hatcheries of Cox's Bazar, mainly at Chakoria upazila, were sold at a lower price than that of fries produced naturally at mild (salinity mixed) water of the coastal areas of Chittagong. The farmers rush for the mild water fries of Chittagong, as they are chemical-free and had a cent per cent guarantee of survivality, sources said. Sometimes presence of a "white virus" and chemicals, which are very harmful to body, discourages the farmers to go to hatcheries for fries.

Fish collectors busy collecting shrimp fries with basket-shaped net called "Tentiya" or "Thelajal" in the river Karnaphuli.

Criminals stage a comeback

Nine killed in one month, Tk 51 lakh looted in 16 days

SHAHIDUL ISLAM

 Crime spree has gripped the port city for the last three to four weeks since the Chittagong City Corporation (CCC) polls held on May 9. The criminals like gangsters, terrorists, robbers and other crimes, who went hiding before the elections, have made their comeback in full force these days--much to the concern of the common citizen. The alarming rise in robbery, mugging, murder and other crimes reflects not only the present law and order situation but also creates sense of insecurity among the people. "We spent few good days during the CCC election, felt secure and began believing in the ability of our law enforcement agencies. But the scenario has

changed rapidly after the election and we are grimly worried what is going on around in the city now," said Chittagong Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCCI) President Saifuzzaman Chowdhury Javed. At least nine people were killed in last one month in the city. Garment businessman Mohsin Riasat Sobhan went missing on May 7 and his body was recovered in the morning of CCC polls day from southern bank of the river Karnaphuli. Bangladesh Garments Manufacturers and Exporters' Association (BGMEA) leaders met the Chittagong Metropolitan Police (CMP) officials and urged them to transfer the case to detective branch to trace the killers. The DB police could not make any headway to the murder so far.

Armed robbers shot one Monsoor Alam at East Shamshepara under Chandgaon Police Station on June 3 as he tried to resist them. The gang took away gold ornaments and cash worth around Tk 2 lakh at gunpoint. Traders observed a weeklong agitation to protest the rise in mugging and robbery in the Sadarghat area. About seven incidents of mugging took place in 16 days from May 14, in which Tk 51 lakh was looted. A cattle trader was mugged of Tk 7 lakh at Panjabi Lane area under Pahartali Police Station on May 29. Muggers took away Tk 22 lakh at gunpoint from a businessman at Kadamtali under Doublemooring Police Station on May 28 and in another incident the same day Tk 1.95 lakh,

salaries of a tea garden staffs and employees, was looted. On May 26, miscreants looted goods and Tk 1 lakh in cash from staffs of M/S Tradecom, a dealer of softdrink company Coca Cola. Miscreants snatched Tk 1.40 lakh from a Grameen Phone sales executive at Nasirabad area on May 19. The GP executive was going to deposit the money in a bank. On May 17, armed muggers took away Tk 11.30 lakh from the officials of a garments factory at Goods Hill under Kotwali Police Station. Miscreants looted Tk 6.66 lakh from the staffs of a food supply agency at Customs Crossing under Bandar Police Station on May 14. Meanwhile, the BGMEA leaders at a view exchange meeting with CMP Mazedul Haque expressed their concern at the deteriorating law and order

situation and urged him to check the crime spree. "We noticed with deep regret that in a span of few days, eight murders occurred (till June 2) in the city while number of robbery or mugging was more than 10 in which over Tk 50 lakh was looted," BGMEA First Vice President MA Salam said. "It also made our foreign buyers concerned," he added. He expressed frustration over failure of police in finding out any clue yet for the murder of Al Falah Fashion Apparels Executive Director Mohsin Riasat Sobhan, killed in early May. The CMP has identified 53 crime points in the city for surprise checking in association with Rapid Action Battalion (Rab), sources said.



Chittagong University (CU) students protest the recent attack on the students on the Dhaka University campus through paintings on a huge canvas at Central Shaheed Minar on Saturday.

STAR PHOTO

theweekthatwas

Demand for hanging bridge reiterated

Chittagong Environment Development Alliance (Ceda) formed a human chain demanding a hanging bridge instead of proposed pillar-bridge on the river Karnaphuli. Ceda, an alliance of volunteering environment development organisations, formed the human chain in front of the Chittagong Press Club on the World Environment Day on June 5. A rally was also held with Utsa Executive Director Mostafa Kamal Jatra in the chair. Speakers at the rally demanded the hanging bridge for maintaining navigability and course of the river Karnaphuli, ensuring free movement of vessels and other water transports and keeping the city free from environmental degradation. Barnali President Saroj Kanti Das, Park Executive Director Nazrul Islam Manna, Sangshaptak Executive Director Sourabh Barua, Jugantar Social Development Agency Executive Directorive Yasmin Perveen, Ridas President Nikunja Bhoumik and Bright Bangladesh Forum representative Morshedul Alam spoke at the rally.



"Budget is nothing but a circus to ordinary people"

Speakers at a discussion here on Monday said the budget we get each year is nothing but a circus to ordinary people of the country.

Bangladesh Chhatra Union (BCU), Chittagong University unit, organised the open discussion on "Ensuing budget: Thoughts on Education" at the Chittagong University Central Student Union (Cucus) seminar room. Organisation's Education and Research Secretary Maqsoodur Rahman presented the keynote paper. Dr Irshad Kamal Khan, Prof Ranjit Kumar Day, BCU CU unit president Syed Ahsanul Haque, General Secretary Zulfikhar Rahman and students Nurun Nabi Babu, Ripon

Chowdhury, Noor Ferdous and Kanchan Sarker participated in the discussion. The speakers criticised insufficient allocation for education sector in previous budgets and demanded higher allocation this year.

'Exempt Vat'

Federation of Chittagong Shop Owners Association at a press confer-

Artistes of Rakta Karabi, a local cultural organisation, perform at a function to celebrate the birth anniversary of Rabindranath Tagore on Friday. The function titled, "Rabindranath Bhanga Gaan" was held at the Theatre Institute, Chattagram auditorium.

ence here on Sunday demanded exemption of Value Added Tax (Vat) for retail and small shoppers in the national budget for the fiscal 2005-2006. They also demanded allocation in the budget for the development of infrastructures of Chittagong, the country's commercial capital. The federation leaders expressed grave concern over the price hike of essentials prior to the announcement of budget and incidents of mugging, extortion and robbery in the port city. They sought regular police patrol at different shopping malls, bazars and markets. Federation General Secretary Abul Kashem read out the written statement at the conference at Chittagong Press Club. Federation President MA Moteleb, Chief Advisor Salah Uddin, leaders Osman Gani Chowdhury, Mahmudul Haq Chowdhury, Nazrul Islam Manik, Abul Monzur Ahmad, Belayet Hossain, ASM Shamsul Islam, MA Ansary, Ali Ahmad Shahin and Rezaul Karim were present.

BCL protests filing of cases

Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) leaders at a rally at Chittagong University on Sunday protested the

filing of cases against central General Secretary Nazrul Islam Babu and others by ruling party's student wing Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) and demanded withdrawal of cases immediately. CU unit president Kazi Mazharul Islam chaired the rally. Vice President Sanwar Hossain, Anisuzzaman Imon, Suhash Chakraborty, Joint Secretary Faruque Hossain, Md Yakub, Nurul Huda Himu and Organising Secretary Badrul Ahmed Bidyut addressed the rally.

Nirapad Sarak Chai city committee formed

A 31-member convening committee of Chittagong city unit Nirapad Sarak Chai was formed with Jamal Khan Ward Commissioner Advocate MA Naser and Shafiga Ahmed Sajib as convener and secretary general. Nirapad Sarak Chai is a voluntary organisation for safe road. Actor Ilias Kanchon, chairman of the organisation, approved the committee on Thursday. The four joint conveners are Manobadhiher Board Chittagong President Quamrul Hossain Bachchu, Diamond Cement Limited Director

Hakim Ali, Engineer Mohammad Alamgir and Ice Burg Limited Director MA Nurun Nabi.

Six-day art camp begins

A six-day art camp to observe the World Environment Day began here on Sunday. Chittagong Charu Shilpi Sammilan and Watch and Pangaea jointly organised the camp. Artiste Abul Monsoor inaugurated the art camp at Chittagong Shilpakala Academy. Thirty-three artists are participating at the camp that will continue till June 11. The paintings of the camp will be put on display at a three-day exhibition to be held at the Art Gallery of Chittagong Art College beginning June 12. As part of a 12-day programme, the organisers brought out a colourful procession from Chittagong Shilpakala Academy premises on the World Environment Day. A discussion meeting was also held at Shilpakala Academy where 15 child artistes, who won a painting competition held on Friday, received awards.

GSK creates new facilities

GlaxoSmithKline (GSK) has created new facilities for manufacturing and packaging new items (Bactroban Ointment & Zinnat Tablets / dry syrup) here. Jean-Paul Reynaud, senior vice president of Regional Pharma Supply of GlaxoSmithKline PLC, unveiled the plaque of the new facilities created as per guidelines of GMP at a cost of Tk 40 million during a two-day visit here on Thursday and Friday, says a GSK press release. Hasnat Zaker, technical director of GlaxoSmithKline Bangladesh apprised Jean-Paul and other senior officials of different projects undertaken during the last three years. The visitors lauded the improved facilities and the commitment of the employees to run parallel with other sites of GSK over the world. Jean-Paul also gave away Long Service Awards to management employees at a function.