

Unknown disease wreaks havoc in Satkhira shrimp enclosures

Fisheries official attributes it to environmental hazards, improper farming

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

Cultivation of shrimp, one of the country's major export items, faces a serious setback this season as an 'unknown disease' has wreaked havoc in shrimp enclosures in coastal Satkhira district that sees nearly half of the country's total shrimp production.

As shrimps are dying within four days of attack with the disease, many panicked farmers are selling small-sized shrimp at cheap rates while many others are selling their enclosures to avoid heavy losses before end of the shrimp cultivation season, sources said.

Local farmers have termed the disease as 'viral infection' while Assassuni upazila fisheries officer Sirajul Islam said the case is quite different.

The massive death of shrimp results from severe heat and farmers' failure to take necessary precautionary measures before starting cultivation, he said.

The setback in shrimp production is likely to cause sharp fall in its export as farmers are losing interest in shrimp cultivation.

During the last two months, shrimp worth Tk 75 crore has been affected by the disease that continues spreading in the shrimp enclosures of the district, local farmers said.

This season there are 19,613 shrimp enclosures covering 57,703 hectares of land in seven upazilas of Satkhira district, said sources at district fisheries department.

Nineteen hundred and seventy of the enclosures (covering 3,844 hectares of land) are in Sadar upazila, 844 enclosures (covering 3,955 hectares of land) are in Tala, 2,709 enclosures (9907 hect-



Dead immature shrimps recently drawn from an enclosure at Sreulia in Assassuni upazila of Satkhira district where 'unknown disease' threatens production of the export item this season.

PHOTO: STAR

ares) in Debhata, 5,723 enclosures (11,478 hectares) in Kaliganj, 3,400 enclosures (13,759 hectares) in Assassuni, 5,064 enclosures (15,500 hectares) in Shyamnagar and 32 enclosures (60 hectares of land) are in Kalaroa upazila.

"Shrimp production target has not been achieved due to the viral infection in shrimp enclosures. About 45 percent of enclosures have been affected due to attack with the disease and by this time shrimp worth Tk 75 crore

died," ABM Mustakim, a shrimp farmer in Assassuni upazila told this correspondent.

"Shrimps are dying from an unknown disease in the enclosures. Most of the farmers have incurred heavy losses this season as lease money, prices of shrimp fry and other inputs and salaries of staffs have increased greatly. So many shrimp farmers are now thinking of leaving the profession," said Dr Aftabuzzaman, president of Satkhira district

shrimp farmers association.

On contact, Assassuni Upazila Fisheries Officer Sirajul Islam said, "It is not a viral disease. Shrimps are dying due to severe heat, lack of adequate water, and environmental hazards in the shrimp enclosures. Farmers did not dry the mud properly and use lime proportionately to kill the bacteria during preparation of their enclosures to start the farming."

As farmers preserve water one foot to one and a half feet

in their enclosures during February-April, a kind of weed grows and ammonium nitrate is formed in the water when the weed begins to rot and consequently, shrimps die, he added.

He suggested that the farmers apply proper method including supply of formulated feed, change of the water and circulate the wind regularly in the shrimp enclosures and not to reserve additional shrimp fry there.

200 Jamaat men sued for attacking UNO, OC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Bogra

Police has filed a case against eight people including Shahjahanpur upazila Jamaat Ameer Anisur Rahman and Secretary Abdul Latif on charge of attacking Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) Abdus Samad and Officer-in-Charge (OC) Anisur Rahman and creating obstacle to discharging government duty.

Over 200 other unnamed people belonging to Jamaat and its front organizations were also made accused in the case filed by Shahjahanpur police station Sub-Inspector Prithish Kumar Sarker.

The UNO and the OC came under attack by the leaders and workers of Jamaat and its front organizations after Section 144 was imposed to stop an illegal rally organized by local Jamaat on Phultola madrasa premises, police said.

Abdur Rahman Mujahid, son of former Jamaat lawmaker late Abdur Rahman Faqir, organized a rally on the death anniversary of his father on Friday morning and it was held peacefully.

Shortly afterwards, Jamaat leaders announced a meeting of party workers where Jamaat Secretary General Ali Ahsan Mohammad Mujahid was the chief guest.

As the party meeting was organized without permission from the local administration, the latter imposed Section 144 on the venue.

When the UNO and the OC went to the meeting venue and announced imposition of Section 144, Jamaat-Shibir men attacked them.

Complainant of the case SI Prithish Kumar Sarker said Ali Ahsan Mohammad Mujahid was not made an accused in the case.

Four outlaws held with firearms in two districts

STAR NATIONAL DESK

Law enforcers arrested four underground operatives and recovered arms and ammunition from their possession in Sirajganj and Pabna yesterday and on Friday night.

Of them, three were arrested at Boira Masum village under Rajapur union in Belkuchi upazila of Sirajganj district while another was arrested in Chatmohar upazila of Pabna district.

Our Sirajganj correspondent reported that a police team led by Additional Police Superintendent Delwar Hossain raided the house of one Azizul Haque at Boira Masum village at around 6: 00am and arrested Md Azizul Haque, 67, his sons Belal Hossain, 35, and Swapan Hossain, 20.

Police said the arrested three belong to an outlawed party. They (police) also recovered

three pistols, one Chinese axe, one motorcycle, a machete, three mobile phones and bullets from them.

In Pabna, police arrested an outlaw with firearms at Kuabashi village in Chatmohar upazila on Friday night. The arrestee is Rafiqul Islam, 38, son of Abdus Sattar. Police said Rafiq is a regional leader of outlawed Purbo Banglar Communist Part (BPCP-Janajudhho) faction.

Officer-in-Charge of Chatmohar Police Station Sayed Shahid Alam said they arrested Rafiq while he was holding a secret meeting with his accomplices at a house near Kuabashi Madrasa at around 2:00am. The rest of the outlaws, however, managed to flee, the OC said. Police recovered one light gun and two bullets from his possession.

Police said Rafiq was wanted in several cases including three for murder. He was produced in a court that sent him to jail.

5 arrested for assaulting magistrate at C'nawabganj

OUR CORRESPONDENT, C'nawabganj

Police arrested five criminals at Alinagar rail crossing in Chapainawabganj town yesterday allegedly for assaulting a judicial magistrate.

The arrestees are Asgar 22, Rana 18, Nazmul 17, Rakib 17 and Mosharrif Hossain, 45.

Locals and Sub-Inspector (SI) Shahid of Chapainawabganj Sadar Police Station said Mahmudul Hasan Sohel, senior judicial magistrate of Natore and a resident of Alinagar Moholla in Chapainawabganj town, was going to a market along with his wife, mother and sister in two rickshaws at around 11:15am.

When they reached Alinagar rail crossing, Rony, one of the gang members, took photographs of Sohel's wife and sister by mobile phone. As he (Sohel) protested it, Rony and his accomplices assaulted him.

Being informed, police rushed to the spot and arrested the five while Rony managed to flee. No case against the arrestees was filed with Sadar Police Station as of filing this report at 6:00pm yesterday.

3 acid throwers held in Ctg

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Police yesterday arrested three female workers of the Star Ship factory at Bayezid for allegedly throwing acid on the female security guard of the factory along with her husband and son during sleep at their Dharmapur colony residence early Friday.

The arrested workers are Shahinur Akhter, Mosammat Soma, and Munni Akhter.

Contacted, Bayezid police station officer-in-charge (OC) Abdus Sabur said the three were arrested from the Star Ship factory on charge of throwing acid on factory guard Farida Begum, her husband Saifur Rahman and their son Sakib at their Dharmapur Colony residence at around 2:30am on Friday. As a result, the victims sustained severe burn injuries, the OC said adding, the arrestees might have committed the crime with the help of their boyfriends as a sequel to enmity developed with Farida earlier.

SNAPS AND SNIPPETS



PHOTO: STAR

Khagrachhari Hill District Council Chairman Kujendra Lal Tripura feeds vitamin to a child at Khagrachhari community centre in Khagrachhari town during inauguration of National Vitamin A-plus Campaign in the area yesterday.

Bombs, gun recovered

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jhenidah:

Members of the Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) recovered two hand bombs, one shutter gun and a bullet from a village in Jhenidah Sadar upazila on Friday night. Acting on a tip-off, a team of Rab-6 cordoned off the house of one Syed Moshahid Ali at non and arrested Md Shawkat Ali, 35, of Barohal village under Moulvibazar Sadar upazila, and Husam Ahmed Oli, 30, of Shah Mostafa Road in Moulvibazar town, with Yaba tablets. During interrogation, the arrestees told the Rab men that they brought the Yaba tablets from Cox's Bazar to sell them in different areas of Moulvibazar district. Later, Rab handed over the two to Moulvibazar Sadar Police.

Two held with Yaba tablets

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar

Rab on Friday night arrested two people with 60 pieces of Yaba tablets at Mustafapur village under Moulvibazar Sadar upazila. According to Rab-9 sources, a team of its Srimongal camp raided the house of one Syed Moshahid Ali at non and arrested Md Shawkat Ali, 35, of Barohal village under Moulvibazar Sadar upazila, and Husam Ahmed Oli, 30, of Shah Mostafa Road in Moulvibazar town, with Yaba tablets. During interrogation, the arrestees told the Rab men that they brought the Yaba tablets from Cox's Bazar to sell them in different areas of Moulvibazar district. Later, Rab handed over the two to Moulvibazar Sadar Police.

Labourer stabbed to death

UNB, Benapole

A day labourer was stabbed to death by some unknown criminals at Singha Jhuli village under Chougachha upazila on Friday night. The victim was identified as Waliur Rahman, 40, son of Akkas Sarder of Manipur village in Ashashuni upazila of Satkhira district. He had been working at a rice mill in Chougachha upazila for long. Police quoted locals as saying that a gang of criminals stabbed Waliur while he was going to a market in the area at around 10:00pm. He succumbed to his injuries on way to a local hospital. The reason behind the murder could not be known as of yesterday. Police recovered the body and sent it to the hospital morgue for autopsy.

BCL man held with phensidyl

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

Member of Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) arrested a Chhatra League leader and his close aide with 16 bottles of phensidyl in Birampur upazila of Dinajpur district yesterday morning. The arrestees are Pervez Alam Khan alias Galib, 32, a leader of BCL Dinajpur district unit, and Belal Hossain Babu, 40, of Ramnagar village under Birampur upazila. They also seized a Motorbike from the arrestees. BDR sources said Pervez was wanted in several criminal case filed with Birampur Police Station.

Mother, son electrocuted

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Netrakona

A mother and her son were electrocuted at Patpatti under Netrakona municipality yesterday. Shefali Rani Sarker, 40, wife of Ratan Sarker, died on the spot and her son Subal Sarker, 15, is fighting for life at Mymensingh Medical College Hospital. Police quoted local people as saying that Subal Sarker came in touch with a live electric wire in front of their house at around 11:30pm. As Shefali tried to save her son, he was also electrocuted and killed on the spot.

Shoolboy found dead in paddy field

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangpur

A schoolboy was found dead in a paddy field near a Bazar on the outskirts of Rangpur town yesterday.

On information, police went to the spot, recovered the body and sent it to Rangpur Medical College Hospital morgue for autopsy.

Police identified the body as Ismail Hossain Manik, 12, son of Nuruzzaman of Mohishewar Nomonirhat under Aditmari upazila of Lalmonirhat district. He was a student of class VI of Mohishewar High School.

Victim's uncle Abdus Salam filed a case with Rangpur kotwali Police Station.

Maink's relatives said he was returning home from his relative's house in Savar, Dhaka, in a night coach on Thursday. He got down from the coach at Modern point at dawn and talked to his father over cellphone. Since then he was missing, they added.

Police said Manik might have been killed by a gang of muggers. No one was arrested in connection with the murder as of 6:00pm yesterday.

Two murdered in Jessore

A CORRESPONDENT, Jessore

Two people were killed in separate incidents in Jessore on Friday night.

Rasheda Parvin, wife of expatriate Samsul Islam of Hasanhat village under Sadar upazila of Chuadanga was strangled, while Oliur Rahman, a rice mill worker of Sinhajhuli village under the same upazila Jessore stabbed to death.

Police recovered the bodies and sent them to Jessore General Hospital morgue for autopsy. Two separate cases were filed.

TRAINING OF 56 FAKE HEADMASTERS

Institute staff involved, laxity of top officials let it happen

ANWAR ALI, Rajshahi

Primary probe findings show that an assistant director and three employees violated rules that led to the selection of 56 fake headmasters for the May 22-27 government training while two top officials of Secondary Teachers Training Institute in Rajshahi showed 'utter negligence' during the whole process.

Following suggestions from institute Director Dr Swapan Kumar Dutta, Assistant Director M Shamsuzzoha let the 56 fake headmasters go away on May 26 while Additional Director Dr Selina Afroz, also the training coordination committee chief, had failed to check registration of fake participants.

After interviewing officials and employees and examining documents, Rajshahi New Government College teacher Shamsul Kalam Azad, the chief of three-member probe team, and Mushfikur Rahman, deputy director of the Teaching Quality Improvement (TQI) project based in Dhaka, yesterday shared their findings with The Daily Star.

Enrolment for the training was done without scrutinizing the list while participants from different districts were included in the training meant for participants from Dinajpur district only, they said.

"I will need two more days to submit the report. The institute director has assigned me to investigate the matter as chief of the three-member probe committee. I am not in a position to directly report all the findings, especially the ones that go against the persons who are senior to me in rank," Azad said.

"However, as aid to further investigation and action by the higher authorities concerned, I shall leave some clues and questions that need to be answered if all the perpetrators are to be found out," he added.

Shamsul Kalam Azad quoted Jahangir Hossain, personal assistant to the institute director, and another employee Shafik Ahmed as saying that Shamsuzzoha ordered them for registering without scrutiny.

Jahangir, who had gone into hiding after disclosure of the incident of 56 fake headmasters' enrolment for the training, later returned to appear before the investigation officials.

"The institute authorities called police to arrest the 56 fake headmasters. But when police went there, the institute director informed police that the fake participants were shown mercy and let go," Azad added.

"The institute officials showed us statements of 18 fake headmasters, saying that office peon Abdul Hannan took Tk 1500 from each of them in exchange of inclusion into the training for which the participants will be given Tk 3400 each in addition to free stay and meals during the training period," Mushfikur Rahman said.

"The officials also gave us a document that shows Hannan sent Tk 44,000 to his village home in Nilphamari on the first day of the training," he said, adding, "One need not be an expert to understand that Hannan alone cannot dare committing the crime."

"Swapan Kumar Dutta, and Selina Afroz cannot avoid their responsibility as the list, comprising 56 fake participants, was approved before the training. They did not even notice that the participants from districts other than Dinajpur were included in

violation of rules," he said. Contacted, Dutta said, "If I am involved why I would go for identifying the fake ones." Asked why he forgave and let the fake participants go away, he said, "They fled away without my notice."

Selina Afroz said, "I was never provided with necessary documents for conducting scrutiny. Dr Dutta and Shamsuzzoha dealt with the registration of participants and the two officials ignored my opinion regarding the matter."

Shamsuzzoha also denied allegations against him and said, "How can I come under question when Selina madam was the chief coordinator?"

Contacted over cell phone, the TQI project director Nazrul Islam said, "We have taken the matter very seriously. Stern action will be taken against those found guilty for the wrongdoings."

Meanwhile, following directives of the education ministry, Prof Taslima Begum, director (Training) of the directorate of Secondary and Higher Education and M Abdul Kuddus Sikdar, assistant director, started for Rajshahi yesterday evening to enquire into the matter.



Carrying of garbage in open trucks during daytime causes nuisance to residents of Mymensingh town, thanks to the indifference of authorities.

PHOTO: STAR