

Jatka being sold as 'chapila'

Fishermen doing it for survival

OUR CORRESPONDENT,
Patuakhali

Hard pressed fishermen are netting huge quantities of jatka (hilsa fry) during the ban period from November to May as they have not received the money and rice allocated for their survival during the seven months.

The netted fry is being sold in local markets as 'chapila' fish.

The fisheries department banned catching of *jatka* from November to May under the *Jatka Protection Programme* in Patuakhali to help growth of popular fish *hilsa*, said sources in Patuakhali district fisheries office (DFO).

An amount of Tk 80.52 lakh was allocated for six upazilas under the district for distribution among poor and jobless fishermen to create alternative earning sources like rickshaw or van pulling, rearing of goat, hen or duck, tailoring and other jobs under the programme in 2010-11 fiscal year.



Baufal upazila, Tk 10 lakh for Patuakhali sadar upazila, and, Tk 7.20 lakh for Mirzaganj, sources said.

There are 25,711 *hilsa* fishermen in six upazilas in the district, sources said.

But over five months after start of the ban period, the fishermen concerned are yet to get the benefit.

The government also allocated 1,582.72 tonnes of

rice for 19,784 jobless fishermen for the same period but the rice is yet to be disbursed due to lack of approval by the higher authority, sources said.

April 12 this year from the coastal areas and different rivers in the district. The committee also seized 4.45 tonnes of *jatka* as 157 drives were conducted in 758 warehouses and 548 bazars in the district.

But the initiative is far from achieving optimum success as necessity leads poor and jobless fishermen to defy the ban.

"We have not heard anything about official allocation of fund for us," said Abul Kashem, a fisherman of Chhoto Bighai village in Patuakhali Sadar upazila.

"We have submitted a list of poor and jobless fishermen but yet to get the allocation for them," said Shahjada Habibullah Masud, chairman of Itbaria union under Sadar upazila.

Asked about the matter, District Fisheries Officer Md Iqbal Hossain said, "We sent the list of poor fishermen and hope that we will be able to disburse the allocation for them very soon after getting approval from the higher authorities."

MIGHTY PADMA TURNS FURIOUS



PHOTO: STAR

The mighty Padma, usually calm during this time of the year, has suddenly turned turbulent, devouring homesteads and farmlands near Bhagyakul Bazar in Srinagar upazila under Munshiganj district. The photo was taken yesterday.

Boy tortured by police returned without justice, treatment

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

A ten-year-old boy, brutally tortured in police custody, was handed over to his parents without any justice and treatment yesterday.

Victim's father Md Sarwar and mother Shahinoor had to take their tormented son from police silently.

Sub-Inspector (SI) Moniruzzaman of Khulna Sadar Police Station picked up Belal on Tuesday morning from behind a coal tar factory at Gallamari, suspecting his involvement in theft of an iron rod.

The SI then took Belal to the room of Officer-in-Charge (OC) SM Kamruzzaman. He handcuffed and blindfolded the boy before giving him electric shock. OC Kamruzzaman was the lone eyewitness to this pathetic incident.

Being informed, Coordinator of the Khulna unit of Bangladesh Human Rights Implementation Committee (BHRIC) advocate Mominul Islam rushed to the police station and strongly protested tor-

ture on the boy merely on suspicion. SI Moniruzzaman, however, stopped torturing Belal in the face of strong protest by the BHRIC coordinator.

"I have seen some deep scars in both hands of the boy. This sort of physical torture in police custody is flagrant violation of human rights," advocate Mominul said.

OC Kamruzzaman denied the allegation of giving electric shock to Belal. He branded the boy as a thief, but could not show any evidence in support of his accusation against Belal.

Belal was taken to the shelter home of Aparajeo Bangladesh on Tuesday night. He told newsmen at the shelter home that he had taken an iron rod from outside the coal tar factory to buy bread for appeasing his hunger. Tears were rolling down his cheeks while narrating the harrowing tale of physical torture.

Contacted, Sub-Inspector Moniruzzaman said everything was done at the instruction of the officer-in-charge.



PHOTO: STAR
Belal shows his injured hands while telling the tale of torture by police.

Land occupied, not giving a damn about court

OUR CORRESPONDENT,
Patuakhali

Occupiers built a tin-shed house and hung a signboard on 0.50 acres of land belonging to a Hindu family at Nazirpur in Baufal upazila although a case over the land is under trial in Patuakhali District and Sessions Judge's Court.

One of three owners of the land, Monindra Chandra Saha, also a resident of Kundupatti in Baufal upazila town submitted a written complaint to Baufal Press Club on Sunday.

Gopal Krishna Saha bought 1.49 acres of land (plot No 5304 under Khatian No 70 in Nazirpur area of

Baufal upazila) from Ajmot Ali and others on May 14 in 1975 and it was registered (deed No 11684) in the name of his three sons Monindra Saha, Gourango Chandra Saha and Nityananda Saha, goes the written statement of Monindra.

Later Rustom Ali, son of Jonab Ali of Modanpura village under the same upazila, claimed ownership of 0.50 acres of the land and sold it through a fake deed to Abul Hossain and others of Kalaiya village in the upazila.

Challenging the forged deed submitted by Rustom Ali, Monindra and his two brothers filed a case with Patuakhali judge's court in

2008 and it is still under trial.

But on April 7 night, Abul Hossain and others occupied the land, built a tin shed house there and took electricity connection overnight, Monindra said.

As Monindra filed a case with Baufal police station on April 8 in this regard, police visited the spot and asked all concerned to stop any kind of work there. But the occupiers have continued their work.

When contacted, Abul Kalam, inspector (Investigation) of Baufal police station said, "I do not know the matter. The officer in charge is not at the station as he went to Kalapara to give evidence in the court."



PHOTO: STAR
Occupiers erected a tin-shed room and hung a signboard claiming ownership of a piece of half-acre land belonging to a Hindu family at Nazirpur in Baufal upazila under Patuakhali district although a case over the land is under trial at Patuakhali District and Sessions Judge's Court.



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