

Spawn damage saps high hopes of fishermen

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About 10 lakh worth of spawns collected from the river Halda this year have been damaged after they were kept in government hatcheries in excess of their capacity.

The high hopes of fishermen, who have collected the highest quantity of spawns in the last 10 years, were suddenly doomed to a huge loss.

Lack of precaution of the fishermen and incompetence of hatchery technicians were blamed for the damage.

Four fishermen--Sridham Jaladas, Rakhil Jaladas, Matilal Jaladas and Sunil Jaladas--had kept all 96 buckets of their collected eggs in seven cisterns at Shah Madari hatchery.

The spawns outweighed the cisterns and were completely damaged. They were worth more than Tk 10 lakh, the victims said.

Officials said the highest capacity of each cistern was six buckets of spawns, meaning that the 96 buckets of spawns required a dozen cisterns, almost double the current number.

Sridham Jaladas said he collected 25 buckets of spawns and kept all of them in two cisterns of a Hathazari hatchery.

"I needed at least six cisterns but I have got only two from the government hatchery, which were not sufficient for hatching the eggs", he said.

"Renting five boats for Tk 20,000, I collected the spawns. I hoped I would earn a handsome amount from the sale of the hatched fish to fry collectors".

"No one gave us any idea of the capacity of the cisterns at the hatchery", the affected fisherman lamented.

Asu Barua, who put the collected spawns in three cisterns at Madunaghat Hatchery in Hathazari, met with a similar fate--all eggs were damaged.

The affected fishermen alleged that the fisheries department authorities and technicians of the hatcheries did not caution them about the capacity of the cisterns.

The authorities, however, denied the

accusation and claimed they had conveyed the matter to the fishermen earlier.

Mohammad Jakir Hossain, fisheries officer of Hathazari upazila, said the affected spawn collectors had no preparation of mud-made ditch for hatching the eggs, so they put too many spawns in the cisterns in excess of their capacity.

"This year the fishermen have collected a huge quantity of eggs, more than they had expected. It was the highest catch in the last 10 years", he said.

Experts have blamed the negligence of the authorities and lack of expertise of technicians at the hatcheries for the spawn damage.

Every year fishermen make ditches on the river bank for hatching spawns. But after the Fisheries Department set up eight hatcheries on the banks of the Halda, fishermen cast aside the traditional method for the past few years.

Manzoorul Kibria, a zoology professor at Chittagong University, said, "Lack of knowledge of the staff of the hatcheries is the reason behind the spawn damage".

He also said, "The new generation of fishermen is forgetting the indigenous knowledge of hatching eggs in the mud-made ditches because of the introduction of hatcheries".

Prof Kibria, also a Halda researcher, feared that it would cause a big financial loss to the poor fishermen in the future if the new generation forgot indigenous way of hatching.

There are eight government hatcheries along the Halda--four of them in Hathazari upazila and another four in Madunaghat, Machhua Ghona, Gar Duara and Shah Madari.

This year the indigenous species of fishes have released a huge amount of eggs in the river Halda on June 1, providing fishermen more spawns than expected.



Spawns collected from the river Halda being hatched in a privately-owned hatchery at Gar Duara in Chittagong. Inset, fish fries hatching from spawns.

PHOTO: ANURUP KANTI DAS

NU students demand end of session jam

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Students of different colleges under National University (NU) yesterday submitted a memorandum to the education minister demanding immediate steps to remove session jam at honours level in the university.

A three-member delegation met Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid and submitted memorandum.

In the memorandum, they mentioned five-point demands, including permanent solution to the session jam problem, making of an academic calendar and its implementation, taking viva voce within 15 days of written examinations and publishing results within three months of the examinations.

ENVIRONMENT DAY OBSERVED

Call to halt unplanned industrialisation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The World Environment Day was observed in the country yesterday as elsewhere in the world with pledges to conserve the vital natural resources and save the environment for the healthy existence of citizens.

The Department of Environment as well as different educational institutions, environmental and other organisations organised elaborate programmes, including rally, seminar, photo exhibition, essay competition and painting exhibition, to celebrate the day in and outside the capital.

The theme of the day this year 'Green economy: Does it include you?' stressed on eco-friendly initiatives at grassroots level and collaborative global efforts for increased investment in forest and resources management to increase employment, reduce deforestation and help tackle climate change.

Environmentalists, at a seminar in Dhaka University (DU) yesterday, said measures to preserve and protect the envi-

ronment will remain ineffective without the halting of unplanned industrialisation and urbanisation.

They urged the government to take effective and immediate steps to control the illegal grabbing of water bodies like rivers, canals and ponds and prohibit the dumping of toxic industrial wastes into these water sources.

On the occasion, Paribesh Bachao Andolon (Paba) and Subornagram Foundation also jointly organised a rally and discussion at Sonargoan in Narayanganj, where Paba Chairman Abu Naser Khan addressed among others.

National Federation of Youth Organisations in Bangladesh, Federation of Walkers' Associations, Jahangirnagar University, Pabna Science and Technology University, Independent University Bangladesh, Green University, ASA University Bangladesh, and International University of Business Agriculture and Technology also organised different programmes marking the day.

BANGABANDHU TOWER DU class IV staff demand start of work

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Class IV employees of Dhaka University yesterday urged the university authorities to start construction work of 20-storey Bangabandhu Tower within a week after its site was changed to avert filling up of a university pond.

They formed a rally on the campus and threatened the authorities of holding further protest programmes if their demand is not met.

The DU authorities were planning to construct the residential building for the employees filling up the century-old pond at the Shivbari Staff Quarter.

The site was changed following a High Court injunction imposed for six months on filling up of the pond on May 28.



A number of journalist associations form a human chain in front of Jatiya Press Club in the capital yesterday, protesting the killing of journalist couple Sagar Sarowar and Meherun Runi and the recent police assault on journalists.

Death anniversary

METRO DESK



Today is the first death anniversary of Ahmad Ziaul Karim, former principal of Mymensingh Technical Training Centre, said a press release.

He died in a road accident. Relatives and well-wishers have been requested to pray for salvation of the departed soul.

Businessman abducted in Dhaka

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A senior businessman was abducted by a nephew of his deceased partner in the capital yesterday, three hours after he filed a general diary (GD) requesting security from police.

Mahmudunnabi, 73, is the managing director of Capricorn Enterprise Ltd, a medicine importer company.

Police said Mahmudunnabi lodged the GD with Mohammadpur Police Station around 11:00am and was abducted from Kakrail area at about 2:00pm.

Sohel Ahmed, an employee of Capricorn, said a group of people including Masum, nephew of late Shahjahan, abducted him and his driver, Shahid.

Masum has been demanding his uncle's share of the business. Shahjahan owned 25 percent of Capricorn. He died in 2008.

Mahmudul's path to JS clear

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court yesterday paved the way for Maj Gen (ret'd) Mahmudul Hasan to take oath as lawmaker for Tangail-5 constituency after dismissing a review petition filed by ex-MP Abul Kashem.

The six-member full bench of the Appellate Division headed by Chief Justice Md Muzammel Hossain dismissed the petition.

Kashem, a Jatiya Party candidate, filed the review petition with the SC on May 7 against its February 14 verdict that declared him disqualified for the polls, as he had been a loan defaulter then.

Mahmudul Hasan, a BNP-backed candidate, was to be sworn in on May 30 as the Election Commission on May 7 declared him elected MP from the constituency and cancelled Kashem's candidacy in line with the SC's February 14 verdict.

The apex court on May 29 stayed the administration of the oath to Mahmudul Hasan until May 31 and then extended the order until disposal of the review petition.

HC stays bar council polls for a month

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday stayed for a month the process for holding election to the Bangladesh Bar Council, the licensing authority, which allows lawyers to practice.

The order came after five Supreme Court lawyers moved three separate writ petitions claiming that there were different anomalies in the voter list and election schedule.

The election was scheduled for June 17.

The HC bench of Justice AHM Shamsuddin Choudhury Manik and Justice Jahangir Hossain Selim also issued separate rules upon the Bar Council authorities to explain in two weeks why they should not be directed to remove the anomalies before holding the election.



Seminar
Department of Environment, Centre for Environmental and Geographic Information Services and Bangladesh Water Partnership will arrange a seminar; Venue: Bangabandhu International Conference Centre; Time: 10:00am.

Massignature
Bharatia Parishad will organise a mass signature programme; Venue:

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