



AN AFFLUENCE OF FISH...AND YET

ONE is not quite sure Bangladesh is home to so many fishes until one visits the weeklong National Fisheries Week-13 at Ramna Park. Since the show began on Wednesday, various local fishes such as hilsa, ruhi, boal, pabda, catfish, rupchada, pangash, shrimps, prawns and lobsters have been on display.

That said, the purpose of the fair is to raise awareness about fish and the dangers lately attendant on it. Of course, there is a plenitude of fish in the market these days and people have a whole range of choices when it comes to buying fish. Beyond and above that, there is the question of how safe it is to buy and eat fish these days. The government, by placing emphasis on an awareness of such key factors as the use of formalin in fishes, which renders them dangerous as a commodity, has certainly brought about a change in perceptions on the issue.

Even so, there are some other problems as well, such as pollution, loss of habitat and shrinking breeding grounds that need to be addressed. The Department of Fisheries, by organising the fair, hopes that public awareness of the problems fishes and fish farmers face will lead to a protection of the fish habitat and their breeding grounds. Such programmes must be followed by newer ones in the interest of all citizens. Otherwise, there is the very pertinent fear that fish, a regular part of the Bengali diet, will simply become a thing of the past. And where would be then?

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

