



Indigenous fishes now dear as most are disappearing

S DILIP ROY, Lalmonirhat

Fishes of indigenous species are selling at high rates because of their high demand in the local markets.

Many of these fishes are about to be extinct because of which many kids today know them in their names only, elderly locals said.

Just a few years back, Lalmonirhat people could taste the indigenous fishes like sheatfish, carp anabas, catfish, striped snakehead, chital, rui, barbel, kakila, soborna, giant snakehead, flatfish, bele, meni, tengra, and many other species.

Fish traders at the district's biggest fish market, Goshala Bazar, in the town said, now one kg of any local species fish is being sold at Tk 600 to 1500. Only two years ago, those were sold at Tk 250 to 300, they said.

Indigenous fishes are gradually going beyond the purchase capacity of the general people they said, adding today rich people can only buy these fishes.

"I have purchased half of kg of meni fish for Tk 400 from the local market on Saturday. I bought the fish at high rate as they are becoming very rare in the market," said Mahidul Islam Sarker of Thana Road in the town.

Jahidur Rahman, a jewellery shop owner at Baniapatti in the town, said he purchased two kgs of barbel fish at Tk

2900 on Sunday morning.

"I had been searching the fish for the last one month, and I got it finally," he said.

Ranjit Kumar Das, a fish trader at Goshala Bazar, said he often gets advance payment from many people for delivering local species fishes.

"Only 4 to 5 percent of fishes in the entire fish market is of indigenous origin while the rest are *chalani* (cultivated) fishes," he said.

Elderly fishermen Sujit Kumar Das, Ramoni Das, Manoranjan Das and many others at Majhipara village of Sarpukur union in Aditmari upazila told this correspondent that there were no 'shelter' for indigenous fishes now as most govt water bodies leased out for fish farming.

The lessees cultivate *chalani* fishes in the water bodies for high profit, they said.

Besides, due to climate change, majority of natural water bodies have dried up causing scarcity of local species fishes, they added.

District Fishery Officer (DFO) in Lalmonirhat, Dr Abul Hasanat, remarked that time might come when people would only hear the names of different local species fishes but they cannot see those.

Climate change, use of toxic insecticides are the major reasons behind the extinction of indigenous fishes, he said.

CORRIGENDUM

In our supplement in connection with Celebration of 110th Anniversary of Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Dhaka (MCCI), published in The Daily Star, The Financial Express, "দৈনিক প্রথম আলো" and "দৈনিক ইত্তেফাক" on Saturday, the 18th October 2014, in the list of our Past Presidents, the name of Mr. Habibullah Khan was inadvertently mentioned as the representative of Meenhar Sea Foods Limited in place of Ganges Motors Limited.

We sincerely regret such unintentional mistake.

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12 arrested while going to Malaysia by sea illegally

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

Members of Bangladesh Coast Guard arrested 12 Bangladeshis from Jadimora area of Teknaf upazila on Wednesday night, while they were trying to leave for Malaysia by sea illegally.

During the drive around 10:45 at night, a suspected broker, identified as Shafiqul Islam, a resident of Teknaf upazila, was also arrested from the area.

The victims are Jasim Uddin, 22, Didarul Islam, 30, Tota Mia, 20, Shamsul Alam, 30, Mokhtar Hossain, 15, Babul Mia, 35, Kamruzzaman, 25, Sadil Islam, 35, Lutfar Rahman, 40, Beltu Mia, 25, Shamsul Haque, 17, and Azizul Haq, 30.

Bangladesh Coast Guard sources said, being tipped-off, a team raided the area and arrested the 12 people who gathered there before setting off for Malaysia by a trawler with the help of broker Shafiqul, without any valid documents.

The victims hail from different places of Cox's Bazar, Brahmanbaria, Bogra, Chittagong, Chuadanga and Bandarban districts.

All the arrestees, including the alleged trafficker, were handed over to police and a case was filed with Teknaf Police Station.

Recently Thai police rescued at least 118 people, who claimed themselves as Bangladeshis, from the dens of human traffickers at its southern border adjacent to Malaysia.

Restaurant owner beaten to death

Protesters block road, set fire to houses

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Thakurgaon

A restaurant owner was beaten to death at Mahalbari village in Ranishankoil upazila of the district on Wednesday night.

The deceased was Ekramul Haque Khan, 50, owner of Dibanishi Restaurant at Mahalbari Bazar under the same upazila.

Local people said, Ekramul's grand daughter Tusrat Jahan Nishi, a Class II student at a local primary school, with several other local minor girls had been taking lesson from Habibullah Al Habib, Imam of Mahalbari mosque.

Ekramul called Habibullah on Tuesday night at his restaurant and wanted to know why he beats up the minor girls much as his grand daughter also made similar allegation.

At one stage of discussion, Ekramul slapped the Imam.

Later Habibullah told the incident to the villagers and demanded justice.

Accordingly local people organised an arbitration near the mosque on Wednesday night and told Ekramul to attend it.

But Ekramul drove away the messenger of the committee.

Following the incident, at about 9:00pm, a group of villagers came to the restaurant and attacked Ekramul and beat him up mercilessly with sticks, leaving him seriously injured.

Restaurant's staffs and locals brought Ekramul to Ranishankoil upazila health complex where the on-duty doctor declared him dead.

Ekramul's wife Masuda Begum filed a case with Ranishankoil Police Station yesterday, accusing 25 people, including Habibullah said officer in-charge Sukumar Roy.

Protesting the killing, locals blocked Baliadangi-Pirganj Road at the village for three hours from 9:00am.

They also set on fire to four houses, including that of Abdul Mannan, Abdul Karim, for alleged involvement with the murder.

GANG-RAPE IN JESSORE

Accused Raju, four accomplices yet to be arrested

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Benapole, Jessore

A rape case was filed against five people, including Raju alias 'Hatkata' Raju, for raping a young girl after tying her cousin with a tree in Navaron area under Sharsha upazila on Tuesday night.

Ali Hossain, cousin of the victim, who was accompanying her on the fateful night, filed the case with Sharsha police station on Wednesday night, accusing notorious Raju and four of his accomplices.

Meanwhile, the medical test of the rape victim was conducted at Jessore Medical College Hospital

yesterday noon.

Professor Dr Ila Mondal and Dr Monika Mohanto of the hospital conducted the test.

Contacted, Abdur Rahim, officer in-charge (investigation) of Sharsha Police Station, said they were conducting drives to arrest the culprits, following the filing of the case.

On Tuesday night, a gang of 5 to 6 local goons allegedly led by Hatkata Raju, waylaid the 19-year-old girl along with her cousin and gang-raped the girl.

The gang also snatched away the motorcycle they were travelling, money and other valuables after the brutal act.

Boy drowns in pond

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jamalpur

A minor boy drowned in a pond at Paschim Bama village under Chinadulu union in Islampur upazila of the district yesterday morning.

The deceased is Tanjimul Islam, 5, son of Badsha Mia of the village.

Locals said Badsha along with his son went to his paddy field in the village. Tanjimul was playing alone near a pond while his father was at work. Meantime, the boy fell into the pond and drowned.



PHOTO: STAR

Bus workers demonstrate at Mostofa Kamal bus terminal in Bhola town as they start an indefinite strike on different routes of the district yesterday demanding punishment of the culprits who injured bus workers and damaged vehicles in Charfassion upazila on Wednesday.

SEQUEL TO CLASHES IN BHOLA

Transport strike demanding ban on illegal 3-wheelers

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bhola

Bus and motor owners and workers in the district have enforced an indefinite strike on 13 routes of the district, demanding punishment of culprits who attacked and injured bus workers and damaged vehicles in Charfassion upazila on Wednesday afternoon.

The strike began on Wednesday evening immediately after a decision at an emergency meeting of the bus owners and workers at 6:00pm in the district town.

Road communications of the district with other parts of the country came to a halt due to the strike on 13 routes, causing untold sufferings to the passengers.

Bhola Bus Owner's Association general secretary Abul Kalam said, they will continue their strike until their demand was met.

District Motor Workers Union and Bus Owners Association also demanded a ban on plying of shallow engine-run vehicles including locally-made Nasimon, Karimon, Bhotvoti and battery run auto rickshaws on the routes.

Md Shafikul Islam, organising secretary of Bhola Bus Owners Association claimed that a

group of easy bike drivers attacked the bus workers over a trivial matter on Wednesday afternoon and injured 15 in Charfassion. They also vandalized buses there.

The agitating workers handed over a memorandum to the Deputy Commissioner of Bhola, Md Selim Reza, also demanding arrest of the accused bike drivers.

Earlier on Wednesday, a clash took place at Charfassion Bus Stand of the district at around 12 noon after a bus of Charfassion-Aicha route hit an easy bike in Sadar Road area.

According to locals, the accident was not so serious but the easy bike drivers gathered after the incident and attacked the bus workers there with sticks.

After an hour, the bus workers assembled and attacked on shallow engine-run vehicles and the sporadic clash continued till afternoon. Police rushed to the spot and tried to control the situation as the clash spread from Sadar Road to Thana Road.

At least 25 from both sides were injured in the clash.



PHOTO: STAR

High school textbooks meant for the next academic year reach from the capital to Bagri Bazar in Rajapur upazila under Jhalakathi district yesterday as the authorities arranged early publication and sending of the books to ensure their supply to students at the very start of the new session.

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