



Unlike other years, fishermen pass idle time on the bank of the Padma during the full flow of the river this season as they are not allowed to catch fish with nylon mesh nets having small holes.

PHOTO: STAR

NETTING OF LOCAL VARIETY SMALL FISHES IN THE PADMA

Rajshahi fishermen seek remedy for 'harassment' by river police

ANWAR ALI, Rajshahi

The fishermen are used to catching small fishes of local species from the Padma in Rajshahi with nylon mesh nets, especially during July to September when the river sees full flow and abundance of the fishes.

But most of them had to remain idle during this season as Bangladesh River Police that started its activities in Rajshahi this year are not allowing them to use nets having small holes, without giving any clear idea of the nets which can be used for catching fishes, alleged the fishermen.

Earlier on September 16, the fishermen held meeting on the river bank at Naboganga village of Paba upazila with Haripur union parishad Chairman Bazle Rizvi Al Hasan Munjil in the chair.

Some 2000 fishermen's families live on daily fishing in the river from Gohomabona of Godagari to Raotha village of Bagha upazila in

the district, they said at the meeting.

The river police arrested several fishermen and burnt their nets, although some of the nets are not banned ones, the fishermen alleged.

The river police officials said 10 fishermen were jailed for 10 days, three of them fined while 1.32 lakh metres of banned nets were burnt since July.

"The river police seize banned nets from the fishermen, but there is no action against those who are selling small fishes at markets," Golam Mostafa, president of fishermen's association at Godagari, said at the meeting.

The law enforcers are, however, allowing some 20 influential fishermen who use all kinds of banned nets, alleged Minarul Islam, president of fishermen's association at Naboganga.

"It will be hard for posh restaurants of Rajshahi city to run a day without dishes of small fishes like peoli, pabda, patashi, katapatashi, bashpata, tengra, bacha, metra and

khoyra.

"When we're not allowed to net small fishes, who are providing those to the restaurants? It's obviously those who are being allowed," he said.

Md Ayeen Uddin, lawmaker from Rajshahi-3 (Paba-Mohonpur) constituency, who attended the meeting as chief guest, said, "Laws are made for the people. I call upon the police to protect interests of the fishermen."

River police officials denied the allegations of harassing the fishermen.

"It is not true that some fishermen are allowed to use banned nets. Sometimes we can't launch drives against banned nets due to manpower shortage," said Inspector Mehedi Masud of Rajshahi river police outpost.

Contacted, Prof ABM Mohsin of the Department of Fisheries at Rajshahi University, said, "The fishermen can use local fishing methods that are not banned. It will bring lesser amount of fishes but use of the banned nets will endanger fish species in the river."

High sugarcane yield delights growers

Farmers showing more interest in sugarcane cultivation due to higher profit than other crops

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

Bumper sugarcane production has brought smile to farmers in the district.

The sugarcane growers are very happy as they got good yield of the crop than last year due to favourable weather and absence of attacks by pests and diseases.

The prices, however, are a little low this year than the previous year but the sellers and the buyers are happy over the good supply.

According to the Department of Agricultural Extension (DAE) in Tangail, sugarcane has been cultivated on 786 hectares of land in ten upazilas out of 12 upazilas this year while it was cultivated on 559 hectares of land in nine upazilas last year. The production was 26,405 tonnes in 2018.

Of 786 hectares, 285 are in Sadar, 280 hectares in Nagarpur, 63 hectares in Delduar, 55 hectares in Bhuapur, 32 hectares in Mirzapur, 30 hectares in Kalihati, 16 hectares in Ghatail, 12 hectares in Gopalpur, 11 hectares in Madhupur and two hectares in Basail upazila.

Though sugarcane cultivation demands hard labour, local farmers became interested in cultivating it due to higher profit than other crops, including jute, said a DAE official.

During a recent visit, this

correspondent found farmers harvesting sugarcane in the fields at Dharrerbari, Krishnapur, Baghil and Tablapara villages of Sadar upazila.

Farmer Rafiqul Islam of Dharrerbari village said he has cultivated sugarcane on one bigha of land spending Tk 40,000 to Tk 45,000.

"The yield is looking better than last year and I hope I can sale my sugarcane for Tk 85,000 to Tk 90,000," he said.

Abdul Khalek, a sugarcane farmer of Krishnapur village, alleged that he does not get any support from the local agricultural department.

Refuting the allegation, Abdur Razzak, deputy director of DAE in Tangail, said they have provided different supports including training to the local sugarcane farmers.

The local farmers are showing more interest in sugarcane cultivation due to fair price, he said.

A sugarcane wholesaler, Abdus Salam Hero, said he has been engaged in sugarcane business for the last three decades.

"I buy sugarcane from local farmers and sell those to different places in the country, including Dhaka," he said.

"This year, I have bought per sugarcane at Tk 8 to Tk 16 and I hope I can sell the sugarcane at higher prices," he added.



A farmer tends his sugarcane field at Baruha village in Tangail Sadar upazila.

PHOTO: STAR

Baul singer traceless for 6 days

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

A baul singer is yet to be rescued, six days into his missing from Chatmohar upazila.

The victim is Subash Rosario, 40, of Jonail village in Boraigram upazila of Natore.

His elder brother Luis Rosario said Subash on Tuesday night went to Chatmohar railway station in Pabna to catch a Gazipur-bound train and since then he went missing.

The following day, a gang demanded Tk 90,000 for his brother's release over phone, said Luis, adding that they later paid the gang some amount through a bKash account and since then the phone remained

switched off.

On Saturday, an anonymous caller told Chatmohar police that his brother was undergoing treatment at a hospital in Dinajpur, said Luis.

They later paid the gang Tk 5,000 through a bKash account and since then the phone number was found switched off, he said, adding that on a visit to the hospital, their relatives did not find Subash.

They later went to file an abduction case with Chatmohar Police Station (PS) but police denied recording any case in this regard, said Luis.

Boraigram police also refused to take any case, saying the place of occurrence was in Chatmohar PS in Pabna, said Luis.

Contacted, Officer-in-Charge of Chatmohar PS Sheikh Nasir Uddin, said as a missing diary was filed, they did not record any case in this regard.

They are investigating the missing diary, said the OC, adding that police are trying their best to rescue Subash.

OC of Boraigram Police Station Dilip Kumar Das said as the victim went missing from Pabna's Chatmohar, they did not take case in this regard.

They were raiding different areas to rescue the victim, he said.

They have already informed the Christian community leaders across the country about the matter, Luis said.

UP member shot dead

A CORRESPONDENT, Noakhali

A union parishad (UP) member was shot dead by members of an armed gang, wearing masks, in Laxmipur Sadar upazila on Saturday night.

The deceased, Khorshed Alam, 43, a member of Dattapara UP under Sadar upazila, was also convener of the union unit Awami Swochchhasebak League.

Quoting locals, police said Khorshed was sitting at a tea stall in Aladadpur area around 9:00pm on Saturday night when four to five masked criminals, boarding on a CNG-run auto-rickshaw, appeared the scene and opened gun shots targeting him and fled the spot.

Khorshed died on the spot. Police were trying to find the motive behind the murder and arrest the killers, Officer in Charge (OC) of Chandraganj Police Station Abul Kalam said.

Youth held for raping girl

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Faridpur

Police arrested a youth from Nagarkanda upazila on Saturday night in connection with a case for raping a teenage girl in Saltha upazila on Friday.

The arrestee, Abul Hasan alias Raju, 20, is son of Sohrah Hossain of Kadamtali village.

Quoting the case statement, police said Raju developed a relation with the 16-year-old victim long ago.

Raju called the girl at a lemon orchard near the victim's house and raped her on Friday evening.

Later, victim's mother filed a rape case against Raju with Saltha Police Station on Saturday.

The arrestee was produced before a court yesterday that sent him to jail.

ELDERLY WOMAN KEPT IN COWSHED

Shomola given new house

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

Members of police in Kishoreganj on Saturday handed over a newly built house to 80-year-old Shomola Bibi, whose four sons had kept her in a cowshed outside their house for nearly two years.

The new house was constructed on her homestead that was built by her estranged husband in Shahedol Dakkhinpara village in Hossainpur upazila of Kishoreganj.

On September 14, upon receiving a written complaint from one of Shomola's four daughters, Sub-Inspector (SI) Nizam Uddin of Hossainpur Police Station visited the spot and found the elderly woman living in the cowshed. The SI then detained her son Helal on the spot and took him in police custody for interrogation.

Additional Superintendent of Police (ASP, Hossainpur Circle) Mohammad Sunahor Ali Sharif and Sheikh Md Mustafizur Rahman, officer-in-charge of the police station, visited the spot the same afternoon and assured her of building a new house for her.

On Saturday, ASP Sunahor and



Shomola Bibi sitting on the new bed in her new house.

PHOTO: STAR

other police officials were present during the formal handover of the house.

Among others, Masud Alam, member of Kishoreganj Zila Parishad; Saiful Islam, member of Shahedol Union Parishad; and Shomola's four sons --Gias Uddin, Iman Uddin, Helal Uddin and Nizam Uddin were present

on the occasion.

Speaking with this correspondent, ASP Sunahor said members of police raised Tk 65,000 to build the house and procure clothes for her and other necessary household items including a new bed and mattress.

A tearful Shomola praised the police members for such a noble act.

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