

# Brood-hilsas flood Barishal market, even after end of ban



Hilsas with tummy full of eggs are being caught in fishermen's nets, even after the 22-day ban on catching the national fish -- for its safe spawning -- ended on October 30. The photos were taken from Port Road wholesale fish market on Tuesday.

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barishal

Hilsa has started flooding the markets in Barishal, as the government lifted its 22-day ban on netting the national fish on October 30.

The government has been imposing such bans every year since 2003-04 to protect mother hilsas. The decision to impose the ban was made to ensure safe spawning of hilsa during its peak breeding season, according to officials at District Fisheries Office in Barishal.

Fishermen and traders say production of the fish increases every time the ban is properly implemented.

But this year, the situation seems to be different in Barishal, as most mother hilsas caught by fishermen are with eggs.

While visiting several wholesale and kitchen markets, traders claimed that around 10,000 maunds of hilsa have reached the markets so far and most are carrying eggs.

Bimal Chandra Das, district fisheries officer, hilsa, Barishal, said hilsa lays eggs all year round. "However, September-October (Ashwin-Kartik) is the main breeding and spawning season for the fish. But

this year, a large number of netted hilsa is seen with eggs."

Hilsa follows the lunar-based rotation of season for breeding. Every year, the ban is implemented four days prior to the first full moon and it ends seven days after the new moon of Ashwin-Kartik month, said Abu Sayed, DFO of Barishal.

"However, even after the ban period, mother hilsas are found carrying eggs," he said, adding, "Which means, the fish started conceiving just a few days before the ban period ended."

The DFO said they have already sent their observations to the higher authorities so that they can look into the issue.

Meanwhile, fishers are also not sure what to make of the situation.

Sabur Hossain, a fisherman from Mehendiganj -- who recently came to Barishal Port Road wholesale market to sell his catch -- speculated that due to the delayed monsoon, hilsa released eggs after the ban period.

Bacchu Mia, a fisherman from Charfassion upazila of Bhola, said, "Usually after the ban is over, only a handful of hilsa are found with eggs. But it's different this time, which

is quite strange. Maybe it's due to climate change."

Ajit Kumar Das, president of Matsya Aratdar Samty, said, "The breeding period of the mother fish may have changed. The authorities should look into it."

Contacted yesterday, Dr M Anisur Rahman, senior scientific officer of Bangladesh Fisheries Research Institute (riverine station, Chandpur), said, "Around 47.76 percent hilsa laid eggs last year and we are also expecting the same this year. This happened because of the 65-day ban on fishing at sea and 22-day ban on netting hilsa."

"We are also taking measures to save jatkas (hilsa measuring less than 10 inches long). We are thinking of increasing the mesh size of nets to 5 centimetres so that jatkas won't be caught," the official added.

About the netting of hilsas with eggs, he said, "We have received information in this regard and are trying to find out the reasons behind it."

The official further said, "We have to remain cautious about climate change as well, which can have a long-term adverse effect on the fishing sector."

## TRANSFER OF CMC PRINCIPAL Students demand withdrawal of order

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Students of Chattogram Medical College (CMC) demonstrated yesterday demanding withdrawal of their principal's transfer.

Under the banner of "General students of CMC", some 100 students organised a rally on the campus.

The health ministry through a gazette notification on Tuesday ordered to appoint Dr Shamim Hasan, a professor of pediatric department of CMC, as principal and transferred incumbent principal Prof Dr Selim Muhammad Jahangir as a professor at pharmacology department.

Habibur Rahman, president of CMC unit of Bangladesh Chhatra League, said the incumbent principal is a student-friendly principal, so students demanded the withdrawal of his transfer.

Contacted, Prof Selim said he received the transfer order on Tuesday, and has been waiting to hand over responsibilities to the newly-appointed principal.

About the demonstration, he said "They respect me and love me, but I have told them not to demonstrate on this issue." "It's an official order and as a government employee, I have to accept it."

## 5th JS session begins today

Bss, Dhaka

The fifth session of the 11th Jatiya Sangsad is set to begin at 4:15pm today.

President Abdul Hamid summoned the session, exercising the power bestowed upon him as per Clause (1) of Article 72 of the constitution.

According to the parliamentary procedure, the advisory committee of parliament will hold a meeting with Speaker Dr Shirin Sharmin Chaudhry in the chair before beginning of the fifth session. The committee is responsible for setting the duration of the session.

Earlier, the fourth session of the 11th Parliament was prorogued on September 12 after four working days, which saw the passing of one bill out of five placed in the House.

## PABNA UNIV OF SCIENCE AND TECH Students show 'red card' to VC, admin

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

Agitating students of Pabna University of Science and Technology (PUST) showed "red cards" to the vice-chancellor and university administration over their alleged involvement in corruption and irregularities yesterday, on the eighth day of demonstrations.

They also brought out a procession demanding removal of VC Prof Rostom Ali. On October 24, a conversation allegedly between the VC and a job aspirant went viral, where the aspirant was heard asking the VC to return Tk 8 lakh, as he did not pass the recruitment test.

Agitating students started demonstrating with a 12-point demand on October 28.

Their demands include: proper investigation into issuance of show-cause notices to some teachers for "raising their voice against corruption", and resolving the longstanding problems of the university.

Talking to journalists, Proctor Pretam Kumar Das yesterday said a 10-member committee has been formed to resolve the matter. "The committee is trying to bring the situation under control through discussion with the students," he added.



## PHOTO OF THE DAY

SHEIKH NASIR



Manipuri children and women perform "Rakhal Nritya" (dance of Sri Krishna and cowherds) at Gopinath temple in Sylhet city's Machimpur area yesterday. The event was organised commemorating Rabindranath Tagore's visit to the temple on November 6, 1919. In Machimpur area, Tagore was introduced to Manipuri dance, art and culture.

## Rohingya presence affecting our ecosystem, says Momen

Foreign minister seeks global support for repatriation

UNB, Dhaka

Foreign Minister Abdul Momen yesterday said the global leadership, especially South Asian partners, need to do more to ensure quick repatriation of Rohingyas to Myanmar.

The foreign minister was addressing the inaugural ceremony of the 15th Meeting of the Governing Council of the South Asia Cooperative Environment Programme (Sacep) at a city hotel.

Bangladesh has given shelter to forcibly displaced Rohingyas from Myanmar on 6,800 acres of forest land in Cox's Bazar. "It's in an extremely vulnerable location. Their presence is affecting our ecosystem," Dr Momen said.

He said the voluntary return of Rohingyas to their homes in Rakhine state with safety, security and dignity is the only solution to the crisis.

Bangladesh is now hosting over 1.1 million Rohingyas who fled Rakhine state after being persecuted by their own country. Myanmar did not take back a single Rohingya from Bangladesh over the last two years but Myanmar, rather in its attempt to "mislead" the international community, claimed that a total of 397 displaced people have voluntarily returned from Bangladesh.

Two repatriation attempts were unsuccessful as Myanmar failed to remove trust deficit among the Rohingyas and there was lack of conducive environment

in Rakhine for their return.

On the ecosystem and biodiversity, Dr Momen said protection and restoration can help mitigate climate change and provide increased resilience in the face of manmade and natural disasters.

The minister added that Bangladesh, as one of the world's most vulnerable countries to climate change, has also become one of the most resilient countries. "However, one metre rise in sea-level is likely to uproot nearly 30 million people of Bangladesh and climate vulnerability is costing nearly 1-3 percent of our annual GDP growth rate," Dr Momen mentioned.

Despite being a developing country, Bangladesh spends more than one percent of its GDP in combating climate change. "We're pursuing a low-carbon development path with increasing emphasis on renewable energy, energy efficiency and energy conservation," Momen said.

Bangladesh is "successfully" managing 6,00,000 hectares of Sundarbans Mangrove forest, a great carbon sink, he added.

Md Shahab Uddin, environment, forest and climate change minister; Prakash Keshav Javadekar, his Indian counterpart; Ahmed Mujthaba, minister of state for environment, Republic of Maldives; Habibun Nahar, Bangladesh's deputy minister of environment, and Abas Basir, director general of Sacep, were also present.

## Army officer dies in Ctg road crash

STAR REPORT

An army officer died and one was injured on Tuesday night, after they fell off their motorbike at Fouzdarhat in Chattogram's Sitakunda.

The deceased is Sheikh Sabbir Ahmed, 38, a lance corporal posted at Bhatiari Military Academy, reports UNB.

Sabbir fell off his motorbike after being hit by a vehicle. He died on the spot after another vehicle ran him over, said Abdul Awal, officer-in-charge of Baro Aulia highway police camp.

The pillion passenger, whose identity could not be known yet, was injured and taken to a local hospital.

Meanwhile, two others died in separate accidents in the district yesterday, our correspondents report.

In Fatikchhari upazila, Md Saidul Haque, 55, was killed on the spot after a human haulier collided with the rickshaw carrying

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A worker unloading new textbooks from a truck in front of a primary school in Chattogram. The National Curriculum and Textbook Board has been dispatching the textbooks to make sure that every school student gets a new set of books on the first day of next year. The photo was taken in port city's Bandar area on Tuesday.



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